

THE

# MONTHLY RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.

---

VOL. XXVI.

SEPTEMBER, 1861.

No. 3.

---

## DAILY BREAD.

A SERMON BY REV. A. P. PEABODY, D. D.

MATTHEW VI. 11 : — "Give us this day our daily bread."

THIS day's bread, — not to-morrow's, not provision for the remoter future. When the morrow comes, we will offer the same prayer; but we will not disturb the quiet of to-day by anxiety about the morrow. I need not say that this petition breathes the very spirit of contentment, that it is the natural and fitting utterance of a soul that casts all its care on the Almighty Providence. And in how many cases does the course of Providence seem like the dealing out of daily bread, without any assurance for the morrow, save that which the mercies of to-day suggest! From the tried and straitened, from those who have had a hard earthly lot, but have had with it the consolations and joys of faith, we frequently hear confessions of an experience like that which we have sometimes had on a road that winds among forests, on which we seem approaching an impassable barrier of rock or thicket, and, at the moment when we think we are at the end of the path, it opens in a new direction, and so on, turn after turn, till we come out upon the highway. Some of the richest life-records are those in which the

Providence always trusted and uniformly experienced has never permitted its methods to be foreseen, but mercies have fallen as did the manna, which sufficed for the day, but yielded nothing to be kept over.

But I have chosen my text for its spiritual application. It is the prayer which we need and ought to offer for the bread of life, for the Divine help, strength, and grace. And in prayer for this I include all that ought to be included in prayer for the supply of our bodily needs. When we pray for the bread that feeds the body, our supplication does not preclude, but rather presupposes and sustains, the labor and the economy befitting our condition, which I might term the prayer of hand and mind coincident with that of heart. In like manner, our prayer for the Divine help in the spiritual life, though it be the earnest appeal of the soul to God, is incomplete when it does not include vigilance, precaution, and effort, which may be fitly called the prayer of the active powers. Now this prayer of the whole man, with body, mind, and heart, with soul and strength, is to be offered, I would maintain, chief of all, for each day's spiritual food, for each day's guidance, purity, and safety. And if this prayer be offered in faith and answered in love, we may feel secure as to the spiritual interests of the morrow, of the future in this life, of the eternal future. I address those who pray, those who seek the highest welfare of their souls; and I would speak of such grounds of solicitude as I know are felt, and as I have heard expressed, by those now listening to me.

1. You have no need of solicitude with regard to future temptations to sin. In this respect, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." It has often been said to me by those who longed to come to the table of the Lord, and in whose lives I could see no reason why they should not be accepted and honored guests,—"I am afraid that at some time I shall lose the interest in sacred things which I now feel, that I shall be drawn away from the obligations of

the Christian covenant, that I shall be led to dishonor my name and standing as a disciple." I would reply, Fears of this kind need never enter into your thought, if you will only offer for your spiritual life, daily and habitually, the prayer of our text. This day has its duties, its temptations, its openings for unguarded speech, for undisciplined desires, for the neglect of undoubted duty. It has work enough of its own, if you would go to your rest with a conscience wholly void of offence. It demands all your energy of will and effort, if you would close it a day's march nearer heaven. But if, with your prayer for God's grace, your vigilance for occasions of duty, and your close watch and ward at the avenues of temptation, you do this day's work and make this day's progress, you have so much added spiritual power for to-morrow, — a power which will not accrue to you if you suffer yourself to be harassed, even though it be about a concern of such vast moment as your spiritual future. As he who closes the day wholesomely and generously fed is far better fitted for some great exertion or fatigue of the following day than if he had gone without his usual food in his anxiety for the morrow, so is he who has passed a spiritually well-fed day, who has received and used to the full the day's measure of spiritual sustenance, better fitted for unexpected and arduous demands on his moral nature for the morrow, than if he had distracted his thoughts and impaired his spiritual activity by solicitude as to what the morrow might bring forth. There may be, there probably will be, occasions that will tax your strength of principle more severely than it is taxed at present, and for those occasions you need, most of all, the accumulated moral power which grows from doing each day the full duty of the day, and without which, no matter how far off you have foreseen or how painfully you have apprehended the strain, you are wretchedly unprepared to meet it. I would have you always dread sin and negligence; but what you need to dread is to-day's sin,

to-day's negligence, not that which lies in a future as yet unseen.

I have spoken of the hesitancy that so many express as to becoming communicants. As to this, I would ask, Do you now feel the need of this service, to express your gratitude, to sustain your sense of unseen realities, and to bring you into closer kindred of spirit with Jesus? Will it be bread for your present use? If so, take it as what God gives you to use now, and believe that by means of it he will make you all the stronger, should there be in the future that which will more severely test your strength. Thus also as regards every other means of grace and help to progress, ask not whether you may not in the future become unworthy of it,—ask only whether it may serve you as this day's bread; and if so, believe that your future will be only the safer and the better for it.

2. Anxiety about the future sometimes takes the form of speculative doubt. A difficult question of duty is summoned up, an extreme case, a case of the apparent conflict of principles,—of the conflict, for instance, between some native moral instinct and some limiting precept of revelation. I have sometimes known a great deal of feeling wasted in the discussion of such cases. Wasted, I say; for, in the first place, such cases very seldom occur, and, in the second place, the solution which one would give to such a case, in his reasoning upon it as an abstract question, would have no necessary connection with the answer he would give to it in practice. Did I suppose that cases of this kind would frequently occur in my life, I should not want to solve one of them beforehand, but should only desire to offer with the greater constancy and fervor the prayer, "Give me this day my daily bread." For what I should do in an extreme case would be determined, not by my ethical speculations or theories, but by the degree of moral progress I had attained,—by my power of effort, resistance, or endurance at the time. Had a case like that of Socrates



been discussed by all the philosophers in Greece, the conclusion of them all would no doubt have been, that it was a good man's duty rather to drink the hemlock than to assent to a falsehood. Yet, practically, had the trial been made, the greater part of them would have chosen the falsehood rather than the cup of poison; and Socrates was enabled to meet his doom, not by his previous theories, but by his previous growth of character. It was thus that our Saviour told his disciples not to be anxious what they should say when they should be brought before governors and kings; for the Divine Spirit from which they derived aid for their every day's ministry and service would at such a moment supply their need. In like manner, if we seek and follow the Holy Spirit's guidance day by day, and some unexpected, dubious, or extreme case should occur, it will be shown us in the very hour of our need what we shall say or do.

3. There are those — Christians too — who, in the colloquial phrase, borrow trouble, conjure up forms of trial and grief in the future, torture themselves with the apprehension that, should this or that event take place, it will exceed their power of endurance, and thus suffer keenly from misfortunes or calamities which may never occur, or which they may not live to see. Here I admit the necessity of being prepared for trial. But this anxious expectation of it is anything other than a preparation for it. It only keeps the whole nervous tissue of the soul exposed and sensitive, enhances the susceptibility of suffering, and in the same proportion diminishes the power of endurance. The true preparation is in the prayer, "Give me this day my daily bread. Father, by thy grace strengthen me for, sustain me in, this day's trials, be they slight or heavy, be they few or many." In the spirit of this prayer, summon to yourself the full support of faith and principle for each day as it passes, — now for a petty annoyance, now for a painful but transient grievance, now for a disappointment in some plan

of business or pleasure, now for a burden laid upon you by another's fault or folly. Thus day by day will the muscles and sinews of your spiritual frame be gaining strength and elasticity; and when some one of the heavier trials which in their turn come to all is laid upon you, you will find a serenity, patience, and vigor, to which each day's life shall have made its contribution. Strength will be bestowed equal to your day. God, who lays the burden upon you, will help you bear it. Consolation will be vouchsafed to you in proportion to your grief, immortal hope in proportion to the earthly disappointment or privation. When the cup is put to your lips, it will be a mingled cup,—not, as it is when you snatch it prematurely, all bitterness, but with its infusion of mercy, comfort, and nourishment. It is the almost uniform Christian experience, that any particular trial is sustained, not indeed with less intensely painful feeling, but with a larger degree of consolation and hopefulness, than could have been anticipated. How often has the experience of the children of the captivity in Babylon been spiritually realized! When they were cast into the furnace, they knew not that there was to be a fourth with them “like the Son of God,” by whose intervention they should be shielded from harm. Yet so it was. And so it is with the Christian. That same divine form enters the furnace of affliction with him; and though the fiery billows surge around him and pass over his head, he comes forth, not scathed and marred, but with renewed vigor for the service of God and man.

4. There are those who have a morbid dread of death. They have, it may be, no fear beyond. All looks bright on the farther shore of the death-river. But the plunge, the passage, the agony of parting, the shivering on the brink,—this, as they look forward to it, seems insupportable. I would say to one conscious of this fear, Look not forward to the death-hour, but pray, “Give me this day my daily bread.” Let prayer be the breath, duty the life, of each day as it passes. See that each day has its fair entry in

God's book of remembrance, and leave the last of earth to Him in whose hands are the issues of life. I have known among those who have died in the Lord not a few who have felt this dread, but never one who has realized it as the time drew near. Some of them have passed away suddenly, or with no consciousness of the approach of the last hour. Others have met it in perfect peace, with unshaken fortitude, even with triumph. Bunyan, in his allegory, represents one of his personages as thus afraid of the death-passage; but when he came to the river, the Lord had made its waters for the time so shallow as hardly to wet his feet, and he paused midway in his crossing to give utterance to his praise and joy.

There is nothing in the Christian theory of death that need awaken fear. It is but a transition-moment,—a birth into a higher life; and if we are prepared to make it so, it will so appear to us when the moment approaches. It is of unspeakable consequence that to-night, and to-morrow night, and every night, we fall asleep in Jesus. But if on going to your rest this night you can say with sincerity, "I rejoice in Christ my Saviour," there is not the slightest need that you cast a doubtful thought forward to the hour of your death. Let every day's life be that of a Christian, and God will care for the close. He has unbounded resources for every form of spiritual need, and over the death-shadow, as over every dark passage in life, stands inscribed the immovable promise, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." Fear not death then; but fear that alone which is the sting of death. Pluck that out, and though the disarmed death-angel may look from afar like the King of Terrors, on nearer view he shall wear the mien and guise of a celestial messenger.

5. There are those who feel a morbid anxiety about their salvation in the world to come. Anxiety as to salvation is, indeed, what we should all feel, and cannot feel too intensely. But I do not believe in the efficacy of such solicitude, when it is directed chiefly to the eternal future. What should

make me anxious are the sins that I now harbor, the duties that I now neglect, the slow progress that I am now making. Let me pray, "Give me this day my daily bread ; save me this day from sin ; save me this day from neglect of duty, from living without Thee in the world, from insensibility to my obligations as thine immortal child."

Salvation is not a work to be performed once for all,—a state of which we may have the certificate signed and sealed, to be produced when we stand before our Judge. It is a work for every day. On the day on which it is performed in that day's measure fully and faithfully, the soul is safe ; on the day on which it is omitted, the soul ceases to be safe. Let me with fervent prayer and earnest effort perform this day's work, and then to-morrow's, and so on day by day, it matters not at what stage the work is suspended here,—I know that it will be continued and perfected in heaven. But let me stop short in that work here, my solicitude about the future, well grounded as it is, will be of no avail. The servant who wrapped his talent in a napkin was the most anxious of the whole household ; yet what did his anxiety do for him ? But for him who was making his five talents ten, had his lord come at a much earlier period, and found him diligent in the use of what he had, the approving sentence and the recompense of reward would have been none the less sure.

Here it should be said emphatically, that solicitude as to God's willingness to save us is wholly out of place. He is our Father ; and from the necessity of his paternal love he must do for each of his children the best that the child will suffer to be done for himself. He who works out his own salvation every day is in a condition in which he can receive every spiritual blessing ; while he who lets his days pass without the daily salvation, however profound may be his dread of what lies beyond death, has not the receptivity of soul which can make him a possible subject for the higher forms of the Divine mercy.

What then is the sum of the instruction that I have now sought to dispense? Not carelessness and ease. Not the remission of solicitude. But the fixing of all our solicitude where we can concentrate all our endeavor. We cannot do to-day any of the work of the morrow, or of coming years, or of the dying hour, or of the heavenly life. To-day we can do only to-day's work,—its work of prayer and self-discipline, of resistance to temptation, of personal and social duty; and there is enough for the day that needs to be done to-day. Let us be anxious—no matter how anxious—about to-day's work, and let our fervent petition go up for so much of the bread that cometh down from heaven as we need for to-day. God will answer the prayer,—the joint prayer of desire and effort, of mind, soul, and strength. And this prayer, daily offered, will be daily answered. As more is needed for greater trials and severer duties, more will be given. And when the same prayer shall go up on the last of our earthly days, and as the darkness of death closes over us, that day shall be as those that went before, and much more abundant. We shall then find that, because we were prepared to live, we were prepared to die; that the nourishment for our final passage was no other than that which we had needed, and the Lord had given to our need, all along our pilgrim way; and that in the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," we had prayed for all that could minister to our eternal peace and joy.

---

#### INDEPENDENCE.

"LET people's tongues and actions be what they will, my business is to keep my road and be honest, and make the same speech to myself that a piece of gold or an emerald should if it had sense and language,—‘Let the world talk and take their method, I sha’n’t but sparkle and shine on, and be true to my *species* and my color.’"

## MY GARDEN.

IN the heart of a great town, shut in by high walls and ending on a narrow street, through which pours daily a crowd of men and merchandise, lies the long strip of land, my garden. Not country-born or country-bred, but with rural tastes and a longing for a wide out-look, a homesick feeling when I can no longer see the horizon, that bending of the sky toward the earth as if listening to some pleasant tidings, I stood, one dreary March morning, looking at the few shrubs which lifted their bare branches above the dingy snow and ice, and, thinking how spring, summer, and autumn came and went in the woods and fields, sighed because the dwellers in cities lost so much of the beauty and glory of the year.

Even now I knew the brooks ran unfettered to the sea, the sap was coursing in every maple-tree on the hill-sides of New England, and in sheltered nook, on sunny slope, and by the stone walls, the snow had melted, and the first blades of grass were straggling upward to the sun, while, buried deep, my garden still lay unconscious of the resurrection of the year.

But Spring did not forget me. The warm rains did what the slanting rays of the sun were powerless to accomplish; the snow melted, and soon the shrubs wore a tender greenness, the prophecy of the coming leaves, and hardy shoots thrust themselves out of the ground, brave pioneers to the more delicate and feebler plants.

It was an old garden, and had once been the pride and care of some flower-and-tree-loving man or woman, and the shrubs and trees which they had planted and nursed still remained, though aged, moss-grown, and running wild, and to me, the new-comer, every day brought a revelation. These bare branches were covered with lilac-buds, whose leaves pushed out beneath the April rains; those were rose-bushes,

those spindle-bushes, and that a plum-tree. Here, pushing themselves out of the ground, as a man elbows his way among a crowd, came the red stalks of the peony; there, ready to run over all the beds, was Gill-run-over-the-ground; and there the pale-green shoots of the Aaron's-rod, from which we made our childish shepherd purses. The slender leaves of the spider-wort and the ribbon-grass came up like the lances of some invisible fairy knights, and the woodbine leaves unfolded downy, like callow birds.

But Spring waked not the flowers alone; the weeds and grasses followed her,—buttercups, dandelions, ladies' sorrel, chickweed, plantains, and knot-grass disputed possession of the soil, and, stranger still to all that noise and din, Spring brought the birds. Martins and swallows scolded and twittered on the house-tops; impudently bold, the robin ran over the newly-made garden beds in search of worms; the ground-sparrows came to the very door-sill for the crumbs; and from the top of the plum-tree the fiery oriole sang to his soberer mate.

Day by day the beauty of my world increased; to the beauty of the leaf came the beauty of the blossom. The plum-tree grew white in the suns of May; the peony blushed with flowers richer than the damasks of our grandmothers; the lilacs perfumed the air, and the roses unfolded with marvellous loveliness,—this was a Greville, with its delicately-folded leaves, this a damask, that a blush. The blue eyes of the spider-wort opened wide in the morning light; the buttercups and dandelions “lay like concentrated sunshine” among the grass.

Summer had not forgotten me. The moss on the roof of the old building which in part bounded my demesne grew velvet-green; the weeds, whose seeds were wind-carried to the dusty gutters, thrived and blossomed; and the woodbine, which made of its side a wall “verdurous as that of Paradise,” grew of a glossier green as it swayed in the soft south-wind.

The whole ground was alive and rejoicing. The ants ran



in and out of their sand-holes with a busy eagerness which had no time to spare for the enjoyment of the summer in the terror of the approaching winter ; the spiders spun marvellous geometric webs, which night bespangled ; gold and green-backed bugs crawled over the grass ; buzzing bees, with stings as well as honey, rifled the flowers ; caterpillars, hairy and furry enough for the north pole, with a voracity suited to that region, sluggishly crawled from plant to plant, devouring on their way ; grasshoppers, alert and nimble as fencing-masters, jumped from blade to blade, and whirled through the warm August nights ; on fervid days, when the air quivered with the heat, the unseen locust's shrill song resounded above all the din of the street ; and, later still, the melancholy cricket chirped of the coming of frosts ; humming-birds darted from flower to flower with restless haste ; butterflies not so swift of wing and hardly smaller, flowers without stem or root, and not longer-lived, sported and played through the long sunny days.

The heavens looked down upon my garden with a loving and benignant eye, — now softly blue and radiant with sunshine, now pouring out showers or gentle rains, filling the cups of the thirsty flowers with dew, or warming them into richer life. Clouds floated above it, tinged with morning or evening hues ; the stars bent over it ; the moon silvered it into rarer beauty ; and soon the trailing glory of the comet spread across its narrow sky.

A church-steeple, which could be seen through a scanty gap, became picturesquely beautiful in the morning or evening light ; sometimes the moon changed the dingy mason-work to "ebon and ivory" ; sometimes a fog would wrap its outlines in a misty indistinctness, while a ray of bewildered sunshine would steal through the open window of the belfry, and every morning the pigeons who made it their habitation would wheel away from it in airy circles, their wings glancing in the light. Once, while I stood watching the floating clouds of an August night, I heard the shrill cry of the night-hawk, and saw him soaring far away above the house-tops.



A change came over my garden. The first freshness of its life was gone. The flowers grew and blossomed. The insects hummed and whirred through the night and day. But the blossoms dropped; the roses shed their fragrant leaves; and silently the flowers were changing into seeds. The ripened perfection of the fruit was to follow the promise of the flower.

The sun looked not so directly upon it, but had a side-long glance, as if he knew he was soon to leave us. Then came great winds and rains, bending down the shrubs, tearing away leaves and flowers,—storms in cities or on land, but great gales on the broad Atlantic,—yet not so harmful to my treasures as the silent frosts which came on the still October nights. Ah! what a ruin a few hours wrought!—the whole glory and wealth of summer swept away in one night. The woodbine, swinging in crimson loveliness upon the wall, was more beautiful in its death than in its spring-time, but the tender plants and shrubs hung masses of blackened leaves.

The insects died or crept away to their winter haunts. The ants were no longer to be seen. Ugly chrysalides hung under the corners of the fence. Spiders had deposited their eggs in cotton-wool of their own manufacture. Flies had hidden themselves in warm places. Oriole, robin, and sparrow had long forsaken me.

Then came still days, so warm and serene that it seemed as if summer had not wholly vanished, and flower and shrub must soon deck themselves again in green. But the loosened leaves fell silently, face downward, to the ground; the red glories of the woodbine strewed the garden walks, and stem and branch stood bare and naked to the November sky, save the rose-berries, looking like little red Egyptian jars, and the scarlet fruit of the spindle-bushes. Yet, pushing aside the fallen leaves on sunny days, I could sometimes find a pale violet, whose fragrance seemed sweeter than that of its earlier sisters.

Then followed days in which heaven and earth seemed alike cold and ungracious ; but with them came troops of chickadees, whose loud notes, as they called to each other, filled the whole garden with cheerful life. Running up and down the woodbine's sturdier stalks and the mossy branches of the old plum-tree, in search of insects, hanging head down, no matter how or where, they cared no more for the sharp northeasters which pierced the very marrow of human bones, than if they had been the softest winds of summer. With them they brought a downy woodpecker, who diligently tapped at knot and crevice while they flew and chattered about him, and now and then a far-up gull would sweep in wide circles towards the ice-bound bay.

But how silent seemed the garden now. Like a wearied child who had played through the summer day, it had fallen asleep amid its broken toys. Then the first snow-flakes came floating down, star-shaped, flower-shaped, and gently covered it. Spring, summer, and autumn had not forgotten it, and winter would not pass it by. Now, instead of the soft clouds of the summer sky, I see the deep blue of the colder climes, and the flaming splendors of the Northern lights ; instead of flowers and leaves, each twig and stem is cased in crystal ice, which changes to frozen rainbows in the morning sun.

The marvellous pageant of the year has been played in my few feet of ground as faithfully as in the whole wide earth. Spring will soon again draw aside the white curtain, and the drama, old as the world yet fresh as a new creation, will be played again to wondering eyes.

---

JESUS CHRIST is the point of union between heaven and earth ; he is a founder of a new humanity ; there is a double problem which contains all dogma in itself, — the relation of the Saviour to the Creator, and the mutual relations which are established between the Creator and ourselves.

## EVENINGS AT HOME.

SACRED to the home before all other portions of the day is the evening. The morning comes with its demand for labor. Before us lie our varied tasks. Over our first waking moments there is a shade of anxiety, as involuntarily the day's probable demands or accurately determined duties rise before us. The morning, too, is the signal for separation. Life is awake again, and we must be at work. Business, domestic detail, the school, call us at once from the home, and till the sun goes down we are scattered—children of the dispersion—in our separate spheres, busy in that thing which is our first and prominent duty. There is no home again until

“The world's comforter, with weary gait,  
His day's hot task has ended in the west.”

That is the glad signal for reunion; and, converging toward the one common centre, with weary bodies or jaded brains, tired of work, tired of play, but with fresh hearts, come parents and children, brothers and sisters, to forget toil and study and care in the calm and happy life of home. The evening lamp shines out far into the gathering darkness, the welcome beacon to the father's step. The world has treated him hard to-day. He has met repulse from friendship, disappointment or reverse in business, his well-laid schemes have failed. Baffled, thwarted, that clear and steady light, detected and kept separate among all others, dissolves the gloom, lifts off the burden, and the world's chill power vanishes before the magic thought of home. No longer laggard, with rapid tread he hastens on. And now against the window-pane, peering into the gathering gloom, he sees a well-known face, and then the sudden vanishing tells him that quick-eared love has caught a welcome sound. With hand upon the latch, one moment he pauses ere he will make the vision real,—one moment, as the patter of little feet and

the joyous crowing of the baby-voice send their love-tones vibrating through his soul, and then,—the world shut out, care and struggle, coldness and failure, forgotten till the morrow,—circled and embraced by those who love him best and love him always, he gives himself over to pleasures and duties that await him there. Nor less the wife rejoices. All day long, amid perplexities he little knows and for which he allows too little, she has toiled and moiled to make that home which to the husband looks so bright. What contriving, what experiment, what puzzle, what economy, what patience with her children, what drilling of domestics, what tact, what courage, what virtue,—only woman's,—to make of these chaotic and contending materials the harmony he finds. To her, evening comes as a solace and relief. She feels its calm, the luxury of its repose. With her, too, care sleeps till the morrow, and the evening meal and the evening converse shall have no shade. Ye who selfishly carry your day-burden with you over the threshold of home, dragging remorselessly into its presence that which has no place there,—ye in whom the quick glance of the husband detects the tokens of inward disturbance,—let me beg you to remember that what is best for each to share with the other of the day's care may well be adjourned a little, while you may not adjourn the expressions of gladness and love which mean most at the first moment of meeting, and, like all first impressions, are apt to have permanent influence. The cloud that lowers over the meeting may spread into darkness and storm ere night be come. Drop your day-burdens at the moment of your meeting; let, at least, a brief self-forgetfulness overtake those who really love each other, in presence of God's best earthly gift, and the heart's truest earthly treasure, *Home*!

Not only the first meeting after the day is over should be a matter of thought and of care, but the whole subject of evening should receive serious attention from those who are as heads to the home. Situated as most of us are, the evening affords us all of home-life we have. It is the only time when

the circle can be complete, the only opportunity for that interchange of thought and influence so invaluable to the character. It must not be suffered to waste under our indolence or indulgence. It must not be left to chance for its improvement, or squandered in a cigar, a newspaper, or the mending of old clothes. It must not be a fret and a worry till the children are in bed, and then a fret and a worry till you are there too. To the evening, and specially the winter's evening, belong mainly the influences of domestic life. Its few short hours are all the uninterrupted time we have at our disposal to know our own or be known of them. The impression that home leaves upon the child comes mainly from its evenings. The visions which memory delights in conjuring are the old scenes about the evening fire or the evening lamp. Mother and father as they were then are the mother and father we know, and the lessons we then received are the best and most permanent in life.

If it were not for the evening, what would home-life be to-day? Is it not the *little all* that there is left of it? Are there not some of us who for months scarcely see our children by daylight, and did we not all see, a year or two ago, that a father did not know his own child, whom his wife had caused to be left in a basket at the door? Ought we not to bless God that, overworked in a world to whose exactings we consecrate ourselves, there comes in mercy the evening, as a silver clasp binding together the day and the night? Ought we not to have a care that it be kept bright and pure, sullied by no ill-doing or neglect? Not so holy and beautiful is the evening without, when moon and stars in all their quiet glory glisten in the sky, as evening within, where human hearts beat true, and the hours are sacred to the developing of the best home good. This can only be through care and effort. Only on conditions does God grant any success or joy. Home is not given, but made.

When the man has once entered the home, there he should remain, as a general thing, until the duties of the morrow

call him away. I say, as a general thing, for one has duties as a citizen and a neighbor which should not be omitted, and there are opportunities of instruction, amusement, not to be wholly foregone. Shut up exclusively to home, men and women become narrow and selfish in their views and aims and sympathies; themselves and their children suffer. The evening at home, however, is to be the rule, and the evening abroad the exception.

Is it not a fact, that the evening at home is the rare thing in some men's lives? There was something more than satire in that anecdote of the man who complained that, now he was married, he had nowhere to spend his evenings. Before a woman is your wife, you know very well, and she knows, where you spend your evenings. After that, you may know, but she does not. The first suspicion many a woman has of the waning of the honeymoon is in the absence of her husband in the evening, and the fact in many homes is, that the husband and father has no place in the evening circle, and no influence there. A hasty supper swallowed — not eaten — in silence or complaint, the coat and hat are resumed. The door is opened, closed, and the husband gone, without a sign to show that home has any place in his affections. She who at first remonstrated has long since ceased even to sigh, and takes with a patient resignation that which she finds is inevitably her lot. Even the children evince no disappointment, and the door shuts out a man who goes to the street, the club, the secret meeting, oblivious of the obligations he voluntarily assumed when he became a husband and a parent, — a man whose care for home is, that it have food, fuel, and shelter, and his demand of it, that it do not trouble him. Is there not many such a husband and many such a home? I know wives are not always angels. I know that even our own children are not always cherubs. I know home does not always smile and welcome, it is not always neat and cheery; but do you never, *if you are a man*, abandon or complain of it until you have tried to the uttermost your skill

upon it. It is a mean and cowardly thing in a man to turn his back upon a home in which he has never been known as an earnest and sympathetic coadjutor and friend.

So far as it is possible, I should say that the evening should not only be spent at home by the various members of the family, but that they should spend it together. Simply to be *at home* does not answer the home requirement. To be thoughtlessly or selfishly absorbed in one's own special pursuit, absent or apart from the home circle, is not discharging the duty. To be in the house is not to be in the home. Some men always do a certain class of writing at home, shut up by themselves, or, if with the family, compelling it to silence and restraint. Go to their places of business, and you cannot see why this need be. Very few men have their time so wholly absorbed as to be compelled to rob home in this way. There are intervals of leisure in the busiest day. Men are far from busy the whole time they are at their place of business, and it must but rarely occur that a man determined upon an unoccupied evening at home shall find it impossible. Others have a definite home employment, some pursuit aside from the calling of life, — very well, very honorable, but not to obliterate the duties of home. Others — especially the growing children — have separate rooms and establishments, in which, with books or work, the evening is spent. The evening life of the home should be a life in common. What a glee is there in young voices and young hearts when the lamps are lighted! How eagerly they gather about the table, wheeling up father's chair, bringing out mother's basket, each settling to his place, happy, busy, and joyous; while the talk, the story, the book, the game, employ the sparkling hours, and sow the seed of never-ending, ever-pure delight. Some one, speaking of the past, says, "We remember little of father and mother except what they were about the cheerful fire; the hearth-stone is the pedestal of their images, and the serene glow of the evening light upon their faces is the favorite picture which the mind cherishes."



Since we have banished that sacred thing, "the fireplace," we have only the centre-table and the lamp as the holy centre of our homes. Never may that central lamp be dimmed, nor at that table one seat of parent or of child vainly waiting to be filled!

As children grow out of the early ways and hours of childhood, one of the gravest parental duties presents itself. It is the furnishing of pleasant occupation for the evening hours. Easy enough it is when the little things are to be turned off with a toss and a kiss, and after a brief frolic, tired and sleepy, go to their beds, and leave the evening free to the elders for their own employments. But very different is it as boys and girls begin to grow, at first straining every nerve to prove that they can sit up a little later, and then, when they have gained their point, beginning to cry, "O dear, what shall I do!" This is a very important moment in life for the child and for the parent, and according as it is met will largely depend the issues of home.

The great difficulty is to know what to do with the boys. The girls are more easily controlled, because there are sedentary pursuits and household occupations to which they are used. From nature they take to indoor life. Inclination and habit lead them toward, rather than from home. With the boy it is different. His first manliness is asserted in his demand to go out and play in the evening, and in the permission begins a host of evils without name or number, — evils most pernicious to the individual, the home, and society at large. I do not know a single good result that by remotest possibility can result from allowing boys in the street at night, and I could not name the sins and crimes which have been traced back to it. Go on to the main street of any considerable town or village in an evening. There you may see and hear, under its most favorable aspect, what goes on when boys are out at night, — rudeness and noise, vulgarity and profanity, that would start a blush upon the cheek of many an older sinner, and do send many of us



shuddering on our way ; and just this same thing happens wherever boys are thus suffered to run at large. Why should n't it ? What is there to prevent ? Darkness favors that which could not face the day ; and many a boy becomes hopelessly depraved under its cover, who would go free if only his exposures were those of daylight. There are sins which, like foul birds, rejoice only in the night ; and in dank dells, unvisited by sunshine, the poison-flower exhales its baleful breath. You wonder that your boys get such manners, grow so unruly at home, become indifferent to you and callous to every good impression. You marvel that they have learned to smoke and swear ; you are shocked when you find that they have begun to gamble and to drink ; you cannot understand these nightly fires, these street and store and house robberies, and the many other deeper crimes ; and yet the prime cause lies just by, where you do not suspect it, — in the loosing your boys into the streets in the evening, because they want to go, and you don't know what else to do with them. I know how it is, — for I have been a son, and I am a father, and have already had to meet my own son on this point, — and I know, too, that it is not easy to satisfy a child of your greater kindness in your seeming injustice. But I would sooner put my boy into the cage of maddened serpents and beasts, than send him out from his home nightly, I know not where nor to what. At best, they could but kill his body ; but the street at night, — after it has killed the body, it has the power to cast the soul into hell ! The ranks of the drunkard, the thief, the incendiary, the murderer, are recruited from the street.

But it is of no use for you to tell your boys to stay at home, or compel them to do it, unless you are going to do so yourself. No boy will treat a home otherwise than as he sees his father treat it. He may stay in because he must ; but you may be sure that he will pant for the time when he shall be his own man, and do as father does, not as he says ; you may be sure that he will grow up with no desire to form

a home of his own, or will form one merely as a selfish convenience. The home you make for him will be his ideal of home when he comes to fashion one for himself.

Here, too, let me say that I feel that many parents, who in many respects are just to their home duties, err in "going out" too much. They are too easily and too often tempted away from their homes, by things innocent enough in themselves, which yet, as conflicting with parental duty, they should deny themselves. There may be no harm, now and then, in leaving the child to be put to bed by a faithful domestic; but what a homesick feeling lies upon that little heart as it lays its head upon its pillow, with no sweet good-night kiss, and the childish prayer unsaid! There are many graver trials, as we men judge, but we have forgotten our own child-heart when we think so. The question coming nightly from a little crib I know is, "Good night; *are you going out?*"—and never anything but duty compels the answer, "Yes." There may be no harm, now and then, in leaving the older children to themselves for the evening. They may learn self-restraint and self-reliance so; but when this is repeated and re-repeated for no good cause,—when children see parents greedily seizing any pretext to get away from home, allowing some selfish desire to get the better of their duty,—when they find themselves second, and other things always first,—a serious and lasting evil is inflicted upon the home. The constant and needless "*going out*" of parents is an example and an influence they shall in vain endeavor by other things to counteract. It leaves an impression on the memory unfavorable to the child, unfavorable to its future home. All honor to them that stay by the house for the sake of the children; and blessed the children whose evenings are made happy by the genial, it may be self-denying, companionship of father and mother.

The mere staying at home, however, is not enough. The negative influence of your presence is not what your children want, but the positive influence of your interest. They want

to feel your sympathy, and to know that you and they have but a single purpose for the time. What good does your sitting with them do, if they see you absorbed in your own affairs, noticing them only as in some way they interfere with or disturb you? The father and mother who are only a restraint upon their children add nothing to a home evening. They must do something directly and systematically for their children. I insist upon it, that we err in not thoughtfully and seriously planning for the profit or the pleasure of our children's evenings, suggesting, directing, if not participating in, work and play, ever ready, when the spirits flag or the zest is gone, to propose a change. I know what all this involves, — a little mother-love and a little mother-wit, that's all. It does not require large wisdom, much learning, or the many appliances money can buy or ingenuity contrive. I say, there are no happier families than those which have none of these. Ask your own hearts: — away back in those simple homes of childhood, in those bright and happy winter evenings, starting so vividly and so constantly up before your vision, had you these? Not one. By that evening fire a handful of corn kept you busy and merry till the bedtime came. You pushed the buttons or bits of leather to and fro upon the old backgammon board, or from corner to corner chased each other; or you sat with slate and pencil drawing most impossible horses and houses and men, — such as the clever artist of the "House that Jack built" must have brought freshly to the mind of many a man and woman of midlife, — a dear reminiscence of boyhood's genius, for which I thank him. And then the book was not secretly, greedily read in a corner, enjoyed alone as now, but was sacredly kept till the evening, that all might hear it; and father read, and mother knitted, and children listened; and then they talked about it in the day, interchanging childish thought and parent wisdom, making the book a living, real, and profitable influence, a friend as well as an employment. All these things are cheap, and possible still, and all that

the variety of our not more wise refinement may have introduced has not increased one whit the material of true happiness. The narrowest home of poverty has at its command, if but the heart will see and seize it, every means essential to the best and happiest use of evening.

I grant that it will require thought and time, and some perplexity and failure; and what one thing in life that we do does not involve these? And if you are willing, for the sake of some lesser success, to subject yourself to these, if you contrive and toil and persevere for other things, why shall you complain, or halt, or refuse here? Your homes and your hearts will receive the exceeding great reward of your endeavor. Finding their pleasure and their joy and their profit in their homes, your children will be saved from depraved tastes and guilty pleasures; and when they come to leave you, the new home will not find them restless and craving for the higher flavoring of other scenes and pleasures. Of the many things warring against the home, open and disguised, nothing wars more successfully than the little pains taken by parents to make the evenings pleasant and profitable to the children.

But how are we to accomplish this? What are the means possible in every household?

Do we not mistake in not having some instruction at home, aside and separate from that of school, less formal, more genial, — the sort of education for which the home is pre-eminently qualified, — the drawing out of the child the impressions and opinions received at school, which, as left by school, have always more or less that is crude about them? Do we not divorce the home and the school, when the home should in some direct way be made to bear upon the school, broadening and deepening that which it marks out? You expect impossibilities of your teachers and your children if you look for a thorough furnishing without your help. How much good it would do, how much pleasant occupation it would afford, how much valuable information would you

receive, from ferreting out together with your children the hints or facts brought home from school, and with how much more zeal would they take hold of studies which they saw interested their homes! Collateral information, always valuable, oftentimes is of more importance than that which is direct. Nor is this less possible where the parents have had no early advantage. How many through interest in their children's studies, studying with or taught by them, have been enabled to supply the early deficiency, and through loving interest in their offspring, though late in life, acquired, not knowledge merely, but a love for knowing! They are very few who, if they have the will, cannot find the way to a mutual intellectual benefit in the evening hours of the home.

The evening may still further be used for moral instruction,—not the dull, prosy, set inculcation of morals, but that incidental teaching for which every home furnishes sufficient material and opportunity. The fireside morality of which the more advanced so frequently speak, which they allude to as the influence of home, was of this nature,—the chance culling from every fact and incident, and the apt impressing at the moment of the best lesson that the moment taught,—a thing done oftentimes in utter unconsciousness by the parent, the inevitable welling over of a spirit that was full of the purpose of blessing and sanctifying home. At home, I remember that this was constantly going on, and the little chance—let me rather say *providential*—seeds which fell at the evening fireside were the seeds full of the life that ripens for the harvest. I have no sense of the “too much” there, but of a constant, yet largely unconscious, evening influence,—influence of silence sometimes, eloquent and effective as that of lip,—which pervaded the evening circle of home, as the delicate fragrance of some fair flower pervades the atmosphere of the room. It gave our home its grace and joy, and made its power.

I now come to touch the home in one of its most difficult relations. Next to religion I know no one subject more important, more easily to be mistaken in, more conscientiously to be decided upon, more resolutely to be met, more judiciously to be carried out, than the subject of the evening amusements of the home. It is a subject I cannot here go so thoroughly into as I should like, and I know very well that what I may say will shock the prejudices or the principles of some, while I shall fail of the sympathy of others, and perhaps peril my reputation with many. But I have something to say under this head which is not the birth of the moment, and may, therefore, perhaps be worthy a hearing.

The care of the parent should be not only not to repel, but to win. Without abating one whit of its authority, home should be a place every way genial to the growing spirits in it. Its orderings should change and keep pace with the developments of the natures it enfolds. In the home, and from earliest existence, you detect the spirit of play. In the frolic laugh of the baby, in the merry and perpetual gambol of the child, in the restless noise of the boy, and the matronly propensity of the girl, you see how early and how large a part in every life is the element of play. In the earlier years the parent has little to do but to control it, to keep the rollicking exuberance within due limit.

But as the years roll, and the child grows, there comes the necessity, not merely for controlling, but directing. And here I think the first grave task of parentage begins. As home inevitably ceases to be the only law, and each young person becomes more and more a law unto himself, some judgment and some tact will be requisite that this critical period be passed through without alienating the child. Some homes, disregarding a law that speaks as plainly in our natures as the law that was spoken from the mountain, shut off the still jubilant spirit from enjoyment which one portion of his being craves, as much and as rightly as another portion

craves bread. Home, which was once play, is now restraint, and the boy or girl is assured of heinous wickedness lurking under pleasures in which he longs to participate as others do, in whom, for the life of him, he can detect nothing of the embryonic demon. Some families make no effort, or but feebly set themselves against the torrent of young will that sets itself against every remonstrance. They offer no counteracting home inducements, and tamely yield to the pressure they should control, and you find the home deserted for a round of senseless outside frivolities, interrupted now and then by some sharp, sudden pulling up, as an awakened sense of parental responsibility for the moment demands. What real good that does, you may see by dropping in some time where pouting daughters and irritated sons tell of some coveted indulgence forbidden by parental freak. In other homes you find the parent spurring the child by precept and example, feeding its growing love for dress, for pleasure, for excitement, converting life into mere enjoyment, wasting the present, and insuring a future of utter uselessness. As I judge, neither of these should be the pattern for our homes.

If history, observation, experience, — yes, and Revelation even, — combine to tell us anything, it is that the young, at least, require amusement. No less does prudence teach us that those amusements should be mainly in the presence, always under the control, of the home.

What shall the amusements of the home be?

Where there is the ability and the taste, I regard music — as combining in happiest proportions instruction and pleasure — as standing at the head of the home evening enjoyments. What a never-failing resource have those homes which God has blessed with this gift! How many pleasant family circles gather nightly about the piano; how many a home is vocal with the voice of song or psalm! In other days, in how many village homes the father's viol led the domestic harmony, and sons with clarinet or flute or manly voice, and daughters sweetly and clearly filling in the inter-



vals of sound, made a joyful noise! There was then no piano, to the homes of this generation the great, the universal boon and comforter. One pauses and blesses it, as he hears it through the open farm-house window, or detects its sweetness stealing out amid the jargons of the city, — an angel's benison upon a wilderness of discord, soothing the weary brain, lifting the troubled spirit, pouring fresh strength into the tired body, waking to worship, lulling to rest. Touched by the hand we love, a mother, sister, wife, — say, is it not a ministrant of love to child, to man, — a household deity, — now meeting our moods, answering to our needs, sinking to depths we cannot fathom, rising to heights we may not reach, leading, guiding, great and grand and good, — and now stooping to our lower wants, the very frolic of our souls reverberating from its keys? The home that has a piano, — what capacity for evening pleasure and profit has it! Alas that so many wives and mothers should speak of their ability to play as a mere accomplishment of the past, and that children should grow up looking on the piano as a thing unwisely kept for company and show!

So is it with drawing, an art which lies, like music, within the reach of most, and, since our common schools have begun to teach the rudiments, an accomplishment possible to all. I have known whole families, evening after evening, absorbed in truest delight, now roaring with laughter at the grotesque, now pleased and surprised at the ingenious or the exact, now admiring a landscape, now criticising an animal, and again convulsed at a caricature. Many a home evening has been, and may be, profitably spent in acquiring and practising a skill which may always be made available.

Then there come evening games, and their name is legion. They are both quiet and noisy, and one marvels at the ingenuity displayed in their multitude and variety, and still the wonder grows as each new home circle reveals some play you never heard of, and each new year pours before you its bewildering flood of games. Certainly in these days



there is no lack of such amusement, — only I think the great abundance makes the young more exacting and less satisfied than once.

Checkers, backgammon, and chess come among the recognized, familiar, and harmless amusements of the home evening. And why not cards? I do not believe these last deserve their bad pre-eminence. I know the mischief they have done, but then the others are not immaculate; and I would ask what there is about a game of cards, in itself and intrinsically, worse than about a game of chess? There is a deal of difference between the use of anything and its abuse, and I am apt to think the *mere use* of very few things in any way harmful. The minister who sits for long evenings over his chess, and returns to it again and again, is just as far from a proper use of chess as the man who spends night after night at his cards is from a proper use of them. Gambling I do not allude to, because gambling does not obtain in our homes, — or if it should in any, I have only to say that gambling is the perversion of the legitimate use of cards, just as the making of ardent spirit from the sugar-cane or corn or rye is a perversion of their legitimate use. You do not curse or refuse the one because of its abuse; why should you the other? I know what cards have done, what they are doing; but the sin is with the man, not with the card. Gambling is the accidental form the evil within him takes. Destroy the cards, and that evil will break out in some other thing. It is too late to attempt to put down by the force of prejudice or religion a thing which is an established fact among us, a thing which owes very much of its fascination and its influence to its being prohibited in, exiled from, the home. Everywhere our young people meet it. If it is forbidden, they regretfully refuse to join, or they disobey, — and either is bad for them. What is better with this and some other things — which we may wish were out of the world, but will not go for our wishing — is to own up to our children that the thing in itself is

not bad ; show them — yes, *teach them* — the difference between use and abuse. Establish the limit. I do not say they will not cross it, but I do say they are in much less danger of crossing it. I am wont to think that my experience, from a very large and varied acquaintance with boys at different boarding-schools and young men in college, is not wholly worthless, and the result of observation and experience with me is, that the danger in the great majority of cases is to those who have only been taught in their homes that cards are the invention of the Devil. Of the homes I can recall in which the young were permitted this amusement, I cannot recall one that has been shaded by the momentary suspicion that any member of it was making an improper use of his knowledge ; — and I am willing to say, though I know what I risk in saying it, that, acting as I conceived to be for the best, I have allowed my own boys the unrestricted use of cards. At first, every leisure moment was given to them ; but the surfeit came, and the cards lie unused. That was the way in which I was treated about the theatre ; in that way it was that the first fascination of it received early and forever its death. The truth is, our children have got to fight their own way through the world. It is little we can do for them ; but one of the “little things,” as it seems to me, is to teach them the difference between use and abuse. Honestly I believe that our homes may derive sincere and proper pleasure from a moderate participation in games of mingled chance and skill, and we may send our sons and daughters with less fear out into the world, than if all participating had been forbidden and all indulgence considered vile.

As mingling pleasure and a healthful exercise, I mention dancing as an evening amusement of the home. I do not simply mean that it should be confined to the members of home, because there are few homes where there are enough to make this possible ; but my meaning is, that it should be rather the informal thing in our homes, than the costly

and foolish thing it is made elsewhere. It is the adjuncts of dancing, rather than the dancing itself, which seem to me objectionable. What could be more wise in a parent, what could give more genuine pleasure, than to invite in a few of the young friends of the household for a couple of hours of rational dancing, without expense, without dress, without anything to eat? I marvel that parents who say a good deal about the style of parties to which their children go, who seem to be alive to the very objectionable things connected with public and private assemblies, do not take the initiative in some movement of this sort. Far better than fretting at your children for doing as others do, or running a useless tilt against the fashion of the day, is it to fling open the doors of your house, and take in under the protection of the safeguards of home those whom you are voluntarily exposing to hazards of health and character. It will be some trouble, it is true; but what right have you to weigh that against the good of your children? The expense, the late eating, the late hours, the absurdities of dress, the dangerous excitement of polka and waltz, the envy which always comes of elaborate displays, the hard feelings, the waste of days before and after, which are the really objectionable things, may in this way be obviated. The improprieties which creep in in a crowd, or where there is no home restraint, would thus be impossible. There could be nothing but what the parent would sanction, or might easily check.

I know this will not suit young people altogether. The glare, the glitter, the excitement — things they have not yet analyzed, things just varnishing over real and mighty dangers — are the attractive things, and they consider simple dancing a very tame affair. But I am speaking of things I know something about. Mine is neither the prejudiced ground of a recluse, nor the partial ground of a bigot. I have had a large experience in these things. I know the world from mingling in it, and I know where the danger lies. If fathers and mothers knew what they were about, if they

would use a discretion which should least desert them here, they would provide at home for their sons and daughters that pleasure which is pure and true, and free from every meretricious alloy.

And why not have in your homes reading-clubs, sewing-circles, the acting of charades, and private theatricals? Why not settle it with yourselves at once that the young people will and must have amusements, and take it upon yourselves to furnish in proper proportion and variety such as are not objectionable? The whole thing lies in your own hands. You deny these at *your* peril. What you do not grant, in some way they will get. You throw them on the world at *their* peril. What do you know of what goes on, or what undesirable acquaintanceship may be formed, at a public hall? Take amusements into your houses, be one with your children in them, and if they are not satisfied it will prove to you that you have not made the change any too soon. Quiet home amusements will lead to proper social ones, and will form a taste averse to those which are improper.

A single word more. I am convinced that we do not make enough of the child-relish for listening to conversation. If a neighbor or friend comes in, we are apt to think the child must go out. And yet a wide-awake child will sit all the evening, drinking in at eye and ear the intelligent talk of the elders. Not merely is it a wise and gentle mental stimulus, not merely may it instruct, or introduce to new knowledge, or provoke inquiry, but it draws out the heart towards the elder, establishes a much-needed, much-overlooked sympathy. The child looks out beyond its own thought and life, feels itself admitted into the high places of other men's experience, comes to have a personal interest, property, in its father's or its mother's friend. Ah! how many in this world there are, the echo of whose voices, once familiar about the home-hearth, friends of the dear ones gone, linger still, twined inseparably with old home memories! Let the chil-

dren stay and hear the talk, and do you talk wisely for their profit and blessing!

There was in the days of my boyhood *a book* called "Evenings at Home"; and there was in the days of my boyhood *a thing* called "Evenings at Home." I miss them both now; and society, which thinks it has grown so wise, has lost two things which did much toward making the men and women of to-day. Too much the old spend the evening from home, in stores, in clubs, in secret societies, in concerts, and in theatres and balls. Too many things have been devised away from home, which draw the men away, and make them associate exclusively with themselves. Our young people follow where the elders lead. I may be unfortunate, but it is very rarely that I find a young man at home with the family in my evening calls. With both sexes there is a restless craving for outside amusement, as if the evening were for nothing else. I have desired simply to hint at that wealth of occupation, improvement, happiness, which there is in our own homes, which it lies with parents to evoke and recommend, neglecting which they have recklessly thrown their children into contact with evils against which they are neither forewarned nor forearmed. God placed the inexperienced soul within a home, that about its inexperience a father's and a mother's love might throw their protection. For watch and ward were they set over it. And God made the day for labor, and the night for rest; but where these joined—when the one was ended ere the other begun—His dear love interposed a precious neutral season, and sanctified it to the hallowing associations and influences of home. Let us feel God's command upon us in this precious season; let us neglect neither its responsibility nor its privilege. Let us trim anew the flame of the evening lamp, let us draw in closer circle round the evening table, and let the joy of our present and the blessing of our future come from the holy and happy EVENINGS AT HOME!

J. F. W. W.

## COSMOGONY.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE FORMATION OF THE EARTH.

IF we take a section of the earth's crust, on a level plain, where the various strata exist in their natural order, and begin to dig downward, we should first cut through various layers of loam, fine sand, and gravel, containing the remains of existing plants and animals, and also of man and of his works. This is called the most recent, or alluvial formation, and is caused by floods occurring through long centuries, each having thrown down a deposit of clay, mud, or sand, borne from the hills.

We should next pass through a deposit of clay, sand, gravel, and stones rounded by friction, which is called the diluvial formation. We should next penetrate layers of gravel, marl, clay, &c., containing the remains of animals and plants now mostly extinct. These deposits have a thickness of about thirteen hundred feet, and are called the tertiary formation. Next we should descend through layers of chalk, and deposits of red sandstone, &c., to the depth of not less than a mile, finding in our way the remains of huge animals and lizards which are now entirely extinct. These strata are called the secondary formation. We should next cut through layers of slate, limestone, and mineral coal, of not less than three thousand feet in thickness, and called the coal formation. We should after this penetrate through a whole series of strata called the transition formation, measuring a thickness of more than twenty-five miles, and abounding in marine fossils, all of which were quietly deposited on ocean beds and then consolidated and petrified. Thus, as faithful records of the history of our planet, they have been preserved through the untold ages of the past. As we proceed through this descending scale, we see that the animal and vegetable organisms whose remains are

entombed in the rocks become more and more simple. In the lowest strata of the tertiary, the animal remains dwindle to the class called Radiata, which form the connecting link with the vegetable kingdom, while the plants are mainly a species of sea-weed. Of the more minute and still more simple species which preceded these, all traces have become lost, because of the delicacy of their texture.

Beneath this formation we come down to the primitive slates, gneiss, and quartz, which contain no organic remains, and are called the primary stratified rocks. Lastly, after penetrating through these, all of which present unmistakable evidence of having been deposited from water, we meet with the granite, which is unstratified, shows absolute proof of having been once molten from the action of intense heat, and appears to be the original and parent rock, from the broken and pulverized atoms of which, combined with substances radiated from the sun, deposited from the atmosphere, and evolved from the central mass of the earth, all the upper rocks and earth were successively formed. Though the various upper strata differ widely in character in different places, the granite invariably underlies them. It is the foundation on which all the other formations repose. It is the rocky framework of the globe.

It may be asked, Who has thus actually digged into the earth to the depth of twenty-five or thirty miles, and found the character and order of the strata to be as described? No one. Such a method is not needed. During immense geological ages, from the explosive powers of internal fires, all the older strata have, in various places, been broken, disturbed, and their edges tilted up to the surface of the earth, at various angles; thus they may be measured with but little difficulty.

We know that this primitive granite was once fluid and molten, because it is unstratified, and therefore could not have been formed, as other rocks were, by sedimentary deposits; because much of it is of a crystalline character, such



as could have been produced only by heat ; and because we often find it flowing upward through the smallest crevices of the contiguous rocks, as by injection, bursting through them in various directions, forming dikes and veins, from an inch to hundreds of feet in diameter. The manner in which these veins are formed proves that the matter with which they were filled was once in a fluid state. What, then, lies beneath the granite ? As this is the basis of all other rocks in all places, and as its original state was that of fluidity from intense heat, it may be fairly inferred that such was the condition of the whole globe, — that it was one vast ball of molten lava !

Nay, such is its condition *now*. Our planet is still a vast ball of liquid fire, with a cooled outside, — with a thin crust of solid matter, which in thickness bears no greater proportion to the general mass of the earth than the *egg-shell bears to the general mass of the egg*. This is now the general opinion of geologists, and is confirmed by many considerations.

The earth is not a perfect globe, but an oblate spheroid contracted at the poles. The form of the earth is that which it *must* be of necessity were it originally a fluid mass rotating in space with its present velocity. Its rotation caused the polar contraction, which it could *not* do unless the earth was fluid.

From careful observations, made during many years, upon the temperature of deep mines and Artesian wells, it is found that as we descend below the surface the temperature constantly and rapidly increases, at the average rate of one degree for every fifty feet of descent. With this ratio of increase, at a depth of fifty miles the most refractory substances must become fluid, and all known rocks melt like wax. We have, then, from the thin crust of the earth on all sides to the centre, a mass of molten lava of more than seven thousand miles in diameter.

In the agitation of this ocean of fire by explosive gases, or



by the percolation of water through fissures in the strata, we find the ample explanation of earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and mountain upheavals; phenomena which, apart from this principle of the internal fusion of the earth, can scarcely be solved.

Volcanoes are passage-ways to this molten, fiery sea. The volume of matter thrown out at an eruption often exceeds the mass of the entire mountain, thus showing that more than local causes were at work. Again, between widely separated volcanic vents a sympathy exists, showing that the power of volcanoes, wherever it is located, must be deeply seated. Universal effects cannot be explained by local causes.

When, a century ago, the great Mexican volcano, Orizaba, was in action, four hundred and eighty miles to the northward Aconcagua was belching forth its fires, and two thousand seven hundred miles still farther north Casiguino, which had rested for twenty-six years, burst forth anew, accompanied by an earthquake felt over an area of more than ten thousand square miles. The Lisbon earthquake crossed the Atlantic, and was felt at Quebec and on the great lakes of America, and from Sweden on the north to Africa on the south,—an area many times the size of Europe. To comprehend phenomena of such extent we must recognize adequate causes.

Are we not forced to admit that we stand on a thin crust, beneath which the planetary fires yet burn slowly and dimly in their expiring hours? A thin and yielding crust, which bends in rolling waves to the earthquake, sinks and rises, bubbles and contorts, under the fierce heave of those pent-up forces which here and there break forth in volcanic rage. So all beneath is fire, the fire of the new-born world, still unsubdued!

Thus geologists reason, from accurate data, concerning the early state of our planet. And they infer that not even this was the primitive state of our earth; that the matter

which composes it was in a still more sublimated condition, — a condition of intenser heat, — heat that would permit the existence of matter only in the state of *vapor*. The hypothesis has much of probability, that the matter of our earth was once in the state of gaseous flame, from the cooling and condensing of which was formed the fluid, and then its present superficially solid state.

But now it must be borne in mind, that there is a link which connects geology and astronomy. The earth is only one member of the great family of planets belonging to the solar system; and it is fair to infer that the brothers and sisters of the same planetary family have a similar origin; especially as they, like the earth, are not round, but *spheroidal*, — a form only made by the rotation of a liquid mass on its axis, — while they observe the same laws of daily rotation, and revolution in an orbit, and their surfaces, like the surface of the earth, reveal to the telescope the jagged mountainous irregularities produced by volcanic action on their crusts. The conclusion, therefore, is obvious, that their origin is the same. If, then, the earth was originally in a state of flaming gas, so were *they*; and before the processes of planetary formation began, the materials of all of them commingled in one intensely heated and undistinguishable mass.

But if this be true of our solar system, it must be true of all the systems, clusters, and firmaments that make the material universe. For the same familiar law of gravitation that rounds the dewdrop and the planet rules those distant worlds; and, like our own, those globes are constantly whirling on their axes, and rolling on their grand orbits through the heavens. The inference, then, becomes irresistibly strong, that the *whole series* of laws through which our planet was developed applies to them also, and that the primal condition of the materials of the one must have been analogous to that of the other. If, then, the materials of which the earth, the sun, and the planets of the

solar system were made, were once in a gaseous, diffused, and undistinguishable mass, so the materials of all the suns, the systems, and the firmaments of the creation were, in like manner, in an original nebulous and formless state, and the universal primitive substance was *one* substance, — matter in its highest state of attenuation, expansion, and ethereality.

We have thus reached, by the easy path of analogy, the germ of creation, — the igneous gas, the primitive and nebulous ether, from which was slowly made all suns, systems, and worlds, together with all the forms which dwell upon their surfaces.

It will be seen that by this analytical process, reasoning from effects to causes, we have reached the same position at which, in our first chapter, we arrived by an opposite and *synthetical* process, reasoning from causes to effects. We then reached the conclusion, it will be remembered, that the primitive condition of matter was that of the electric and magnetic ethers. Thus the same hypothesis is arrived at from two independent paths of reasoning; of course the probability of its truth is much increased, and we may reasonably conclude that any error in our statement is probably an error in the *form*, rather than in the *principles*, of our conclusion.

Gazing, then, into the immeasurable depths of space, and drawing aside the curtain which hides the primitive condition of matter, we discover, extending through an inconceivable expanse, one diffused and undivided ocean of the rarest and most subtile ethers.

This was the birth of the universe. To gain a more vivid conception of this condition, let us suppose that the present planetary worlds were resolved into their primitive gases; let us conceive that the innumerable suns which fill immensity, with all their retinue of revolving orbs, should start from their orbits, precipitate themselves upon their general centre, and flash into a common embrace, — thus forming an

all-expanded ocean of ethereal flame, an unimaginable sun, whose limits no thought can reach, and whose brightness no eye could bear. This would faintly represent to the mind the original igneous matter of systems and of suns. These electric and magnetic elements are only less subtile than spirit itself. They are the most refined and sublimated fluids which chemistry knows; she cannot weigh, measure, or analyze them. They move almost with the velocity of thought, and can perform the circuit of the globe in a little less than the eighth part of a second. It requires four millions of particles of atmospheric air to compose an atom as large as the smallest visible grain of sand; and yet these electric and magnetic elements are known to be, *at least*, seven hundred thousand times finer than air. They involve all the elements in being, they are found in all; and from them all subsequent material formations took their rise.

These elements were the *first* outflowing creation of Deity. From the positive and negative relations that subsisted between magnetism and electricity there then occurred a spontaneous union and assimilation of these elements, from which was produced a more dense and material formation, differing in appearance from both. This substance is known in chemistry as *oxygen gas*. Says Mantell, an eminent geologist, "Half the ponderable matter of the earth consists of oxygen"; it is that form of matter which supports combustion, which is essential to respiration, and which is the basis of all vegetable and animal vitality. This element makes about one fourth of the bulk of the earth's atmosphere, and may be viewed as the next step in the direction of tangible matter.

Again, the process of chemical union, condensation, and reproduction went on. The elements already existing entered into a new combination, and the substance called *nitrogen* was formed. This gas constitutes nearly three fourths of the common atmosphere, and in it primitive matter made a still nearer approach to the realm of the visible and tangible creation.

Next, from a union and combination of all the previous elements, *hydrogen* was formed. This gas, when united with oxygen in a certain proportion, forms water ; but when mixed with another proportion of oxygen, it burns rapidly, and with violent explosion.

We have now before us the constituent elements of the air, water, and fire ; and it will be seen that it is only necessary that these elements should be properly united and combined, in order to produce all the tangible substances of Nature, down even to her densest material forms.

From the union of oxygen and nitrogen a material atmosphere was formed. From the blending of oxygen and hydrogen water was produced in its rarefied and diffused state, being expanded through the immeasurable immensity as an unimaginable ocean of etherealized vapor. And then, by another union of the same gases, there was evolved, as a necessary result, a vast expanse of nebulous flame, whose height and breadth and depth no earthly mind can measure. Flaming with the most inconceivable heat, its vaporized materials extended through space like a sea, without bounds, inconceivable, and containing the substance from which were evolved all worlds, all suns, and all systems in the immensity of space.

It may be somewhat difficult for some minds to understand how visible, tangible, ponderable matter can be formed from invisible, intangible, and imponderable elements. But the same results are produced every day. The invisible exhalations of the water rise above the surface of the earth, and become condensed, and visible as *clouds* ; then the same elements, still further condensed, descend to the earth as rain, snow, or hail, which is tangible to the dullest sense. The invisible elements, suitably combining, form globules of water, which, by another chemical union, change to ice. It would only require a different union of the same elements which produce the hailstones to form a substance which the senses would discern as liquid or gaseous flame. In the laboratory

of the chemist, all kinds of matter easily pass through every grade of transmutation, from the most dense and solid to the most gaseous state. Metals and stones are but condensed gases, and can easily be converted into gases, and so, *vice versa*, can these be convertible into metals.

Having thus traced back the matter of the universe to its original vaporous form, let us study the changes which must necessarily have occurred according to well-known physical law.

This mass of heated world-vapor would contain all the elements, gaseous and solid. No compounds could exist from its intense heat; but all its matter would be expanded and vaporized, and mingled in an undistinguishable mass. This immense ocean would be agitated from the centre to the surface with indescribable undulations. The laws of attraction and repulsion would universally prevail. Every atom of this mass would attract or repel its neighbor, and likewise move towards a common centre. Condensation would begin, heat would be radiated, and the temperature of the vast expanse slowly diminish. Magnetism is the principle of *affinity*, while electricity is the principle of *repulsion*; that is, magnetism binds atom to atom and body to body, by the power of an innate attraction, resulting from the chemical union of its particles, while electricity manifests a repelling force, two bodies positively charged with electricity having a tendency to repel each other, and fly off in straight lines from a given centre. By the constant action of the magnetic force, particles of like nature would attract each other, and would be drawn together through affinity, so as to form comparatively dense masses, or nuclei. At innumerable points, innumerable agglomerations, of various size, form, and density, would arise. If, now, from among these primary nuclei that strew the universe, we choose that agglomeration which is forming at the point indicated by our sun's centre, we can learn the constitution of our solar system. This vapory nucleus, after undergoing condensation for ages, would round into a spher-

ical form, its centre being the centre of our sun, its circumference reaching out beyond the orbit of Neptune, with a diameter of more than six thousand millions of miles.

Now, *motion* and *rotation* in this mass would begin with the very formation of the nucleus. Different currents of water, flowing towards a common centre, produce, as is well known, a *whirl*, rapid at the point of meeting, and growing more feeble till it is lost in the general stream. So the very first two particles which attracted each other, and were drawn together, would begin this rotary movement. The two particles are joined by others; a nucleus is formed, which, while condensing, would rotate more and more rapidly. The momentum of each stream of these particles of nebulous matter flowing inward from all directions towards the condensed centre, and impinging upon it, would increase the rotary movement.

Thus in this vapory mass rotation and condensation would go hand in hand, and the shapeless nebula slowly become a revolving sun. As the velocity of rotation increased, its poles would contract, until it became an extremely flattened spheroid, shaped somewhat like a grindstone. Then at the equator of the sphere, where the motion was most rapid, the external portions of this mass would become loosened and detached, and form an independent ring around the central mass, revolving as a separate ring, with just that velocity with which, while the surface of the mass, it rotated. This ring, containing one or more spots, or nuclei, of comparatively dense matter, would be soon broken up, its fragments settling into a planet, and continuing the motion it possessed as a ring. We thus account for the planet Neptune, the world first formed, and farthest from the sun.

The next fragment thrown off, in the course of ages, by the centrifugal force of the sun, became the planet Uranus. Then came Saturn; then Jupiter; then the asteroids, which appear to have repelled rather than attracted each other, and, instead of settling into one planet, revolve round the sun as



distinct, though small, worlds. The next fragment formed the planet Mars; the next was the Earth; then came Venus, and finally Mercury, which terminated for the present the birth of planetary worlds from the common mother, the sun,\* though she is still young, and some astronomers, from the present size and appearance of the spots on her disk, prophesy a still further increase of the solar family. Thus the sun, through condensation and the whirling off of worlds, has shrunk from an original bulk of more than six thousand millions of miles in diameter, to a globe only eight hundred and eighty-two thousand miles in diameter; though it is still, according to Galle, seven hundred and thirty-eight times greater than the combined volume of all the planets. Many of the planets whirled off from the parent sphere were in a condition so nebulous as to admit of those bodies discarding, in their turn, yet other fragments, which became moons. Of these satellites Neptune has two, Uranus six, Saturn eight moons and three uniform bands, which did not break up into fragments, but continue to revolve as rings; Jupiter has four moons, and our Earth one.

A German Professor has made the world his debtor by a very beautiful experiment in illustration of the method of creation. He took a glass jar, having a metallic rod inserted, and partially filled it with a mixture of alcohol and water, of the same density as oil. He then poured in a few drops of oil, which at once assumed a globular form, and, taking up its position in the centre, used the rod as its axis. Making the globe rotate, he sees the poles gradually flattening, the oil piling itself up about the centre, or equator, and its spheroidal form increasing, until a fine ring is thrown off at its margin. This ring continues to revolve, soon

\* Since 1847 no less than fifty new asteroids have been discovered between Mars and Jupiter, and the astronomers *think* they discover either a new planet or one of a new series of asteroids between the Sun and Mercury. Dr. Lescarbault's new planet, called *Vulcan*, is, however, a subject of warm controversy. See North British Review, August, 1860. — Eds.

breaks up into fragments, which gather into one or more smaller globes, all circling the same course, — each globe wheeling upon its own axis, and around the axis upon which the parent globe was formed, — thus brilliantly illustrating in miniature the laws governing our earth and sun and solar system. For the same law which rounds the 'dew-drops, rounds the great world, chains the suns in their fiery paths, and makes a globule of oil the type of the universe.

I have said that, while magnetism or gravitation was the attractive force, drawing the atoms of matter together and towards a centre, electricity was the principle of *repulsion*; and in the case of *comets*, those luminous wanderers of the sky, this principle seems to have been active in modifying the general method of creation we have stated. In those instances, before the surface of the sun became so far incrustated as to be loosened and whirled off as a ring, the spot of incrustation, or nucleus of superior density, becoming positively charged with the electric element, is repelled, and thrown off in a straight line from the original mass, rushing and whirling through the deep of space with an unimaginable velocity. In the first stages of its motion this body appears as a flaming comet, dragging in its course a long and fiery trail, and seemingly plunging, aimless and ungoverned, into the abyss. But though it passes over a distance of millions of miles, it is still linked with the central sphere from which it was born; subtile threads of magnetism, stronger than metal bands, flow with it in its outward course, and grapple it, as with indissoluble ties, to its parent body. By the traction of these invisible threads, the velocity of the flaming mass is slowly slackened, its course is gradually bent from the strait line of simple motion, till it wheels on its truant course, and rushes back from the outskirts of the system to the sun. By the fierce heat of the solar rays, — a heat many thousand times intenser than that of red-hot iron, — its matter is vaporized and expanded to vast

dimensions, until it is so attenuated as to show like a speck of cloud, or lock of down, admitting the free passage of the sunbeams through it, and not intercepting the light of the smallest star.

After long ages, the electrical repulsion and the gravitating influence counterbalance and combine in harmony; the body "without form and void" assumes a spherical shape, and revolves in a circular orbit round its blazing sun. Its surface becomes gradually cooled; it undergoes violent convulsions and cataclysms; its aqueous atoms, hitherto held in solution in the dense atmosphere, slowly fill the beds of its irregular surface, which contracts, cools, hardens, and closes on the full fires within.

The mass of nebulous, chaotic matter has passed from the gaseous to the fluid state, and from the fluid to the solid; the primeval process of creation is completed, and an earth is in its infancy. It now appears of a spheroidal form, the crust alone somewhat solid, whilst all below is a mass of molten matter, upheaving and bursting forth from a thousand volcanic mouths.

E. M. W.

---

SAVIOUR, GIVE ME THY PEACE.

SAVIOUR, give me thy peace!  
O let me feel my sins are washed away!  
Give me a sense of pardon now, I pray,  
Let doubt and fear both cease.

Remember not my sin,  
Tell me the day will come I shall forget;  
Remembrance helps me now, therefore not yet,—  
'Tis well to look within.

But oh ! what do I see ?  
Such darkness, such impurity, such stain,  
I weep, I groan, I dare not look again,  
And then I fly to Thee.

I know Thou wilt forgive ;  
But wilt Thou for the future keep me pure ?  
I am so weak, so restless, insecure,  
Without Thee cannot live.

O never let me go !  
Never do Thou from me, dear Lord, depart ;  
Be at my side, and in my throbbing heart ;  
Shield me in joy and woe.

When I am faint with fear,  
Whisper, that, if the day of darkness come,  
Thou wilt come with it, be my staff, my home,  
And more than ever near.

But when the fear is past, —  
When the glad sun shines through the clouds once more,  
And the dark wave has broken on the shore, —  
Then, Saviour, hold me fast.

Grief keeps me close to Thee ;  
I almost fear to have my pain removed ;  
Wouldst Thou by this frail heart be so beloved  
If all were well with me ?

O, when my heart is sore,  
And bleeding in its loneliness and woe,  
Subdue it with Thy love, and fill it so  
That it shall weep no more.

Fold me in thine embrace,  
O let my weariness find rest in Thee !  
For my long thirst sufficient it will be  
To look upon Thy face.

## THE HUMAN MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST.

THE foremost name in our world, at least as we Christians judge, is the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Even those in Christendom who recognize neither the Divine sonship nor the Divine mission of our Lord place him at the head of our race, calling him wisest and best, king of men, saintliest of saints. Say what we will of his power in heaven,—of his glory with the Father before the world was, of his present exaltation,—his power on earth none will pretend to deny. The very name Christendom is a perpetual witness for it. Every new year, called a year of the Lord, attests it; those who cannot be said to have received him, because they have not yet taken him to their hearts, do yet unconsciously confess him; their thoughts, their affections, their hopes and fears, their words and works, are colored and shaped by the power that goes out from him. It is enough almost to touch but the hem of his garment. I take this to be a fact, and a fact which does not owe its recognition to any theory about the Christ, but will be admitted as exceedingly significant by persons of every shade of Christian opinion and of no Christian opinion whatever.

Now, in view of the mighty grasp which Jesus Christ has so manifestly gained upon our world, I wish to ask, and if I can to answer, this question. How was the life manifested? What do we find in Christ?—all of us, I mean; and by saying “all of us,” I exclude all inquiry as to his nature, his essence and innermost being, the life of his life, the mystery of his relation to God the Father everlasting, the heavenly ground of his being,—I ask rather in what was this innermost being, this Word of God, this Divine Essence, this Son of the Highest manifested, what form did this life assume, by what speech, by what acts, was it expressed, what manner of person was He whom the world has been glad to accept as its Head? If this question be truly answered, we

shall know what God seeks to reveal to us beyond all things else, what man in his deepest heart and soberest thought most reverences, and what we most need and are to grow into as we grow into a likeness to our Saviour.

How was the life manifested? What did God give us in that life. I gather my reply from the Gospels. St. John tells us, indeed, that only the smallest part of what might have been written concerning Jesus was written; but it is fair to suppose that what we have fairly represents what we have not. And I must answer first negatively; for what we do not find, what we miss, is profoundly significant. One who will come to the New Testament fresh from the study of human fame and earthly greatness will perhaps be disappointed, — surprised to find almost nothing in the Gospels of what he has been accustomed to seek and admire in the biographies of men. Here is an altogether peculiar type of greatness. It is no small matter to tell what the Christ was not, and how utterly without claim he would be, were his claims such as are commonly put forth in behalf of famous men. It will be instructive to dwell a moment upon this merely negative side, — to think of the characters, highly and justly esteemed amongst men, in which he was not manifested, of the words which he did not speak, of the works which he did not do; though, unless the world has strangely mistaken the language that he used concerning his being, and over-estimated his stature and his grasp, these words must have been the easiest of utterance, these works the easiest of performance. Jesus Christ was not manifested to the world as a human ruler, as a teacher of science, physical, intellectual, moral, or religious, as a man of genius in art, in poetry, in letters, — not in these ways was he commended to the fishermen of Galilee and the publicans of Judæa, and through them to the world.

1. They called him a king, but he was not. He scrupulously refrained from commanding men in an outward way. He would not put his miraculous powers to this use. He

refused to marshal a host and put himself at the head of it. He would not be a king. He offended those who would have made him one, by what seemed to them indecision and pusillanimity, and encouraged them in their assertion that, spite of his miracles, he could not be the Messiah, but was only a pretender raised up by the Evil One to disappoint the nation's hope. My kingdom, said he, is not of this world, and when men say Christ is the head of the race, they do not say so because, even by means which are usually reckoned legitimate, though in his case they certainly would not have been, he dethroned Tiberias and exchanged his crown of thorns for a jewelled diadem.

2. And if you look into the Gospels, and read the words of Jesus, you will not find science of any sort, — any anticipation of human discoveries, any teachings about the mysteries of the earth or of the stars, of the plants or of the planets, any disclosures of the secrets that are locked up in these curious bodies and wonderful minds. "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth"; but the Word has not given us so much as a whisper of its secrets by the lips of Him who was the Word made flesh. If we would know them, we must learn them for ourselves. Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses, but he never breathed a syllable which could avail the physician. He guarded that strange secret most carefully. When he spake, the poor lunatic returned to his right mind; but not a word did he utter, save in the common speech of his day, touching the awful maladies of the soul. Nay, even his great doctrines of God and man, of reconciliation and redemption, of heaven, of immortality, of judgment, were given, not as science, not as systems, not in balanced propositions arranged in due logical sequence, but rather as religion and as moral principle than as theology or as abstract ethics. Creeds and catechisms he did not leave. Eagerly as men have sought for them, and easily as Christ might have set them forth, you will not find them in



the Gospels. More or less successfully you can make them out of the Saviour's words by comparison and by inference, but you will find that very largely they are yours and not his. If you wish for a manual of theological or ethical science, you must look for it outside of the Bible. At the best, it will only supply you with the materials for your bodies of divinity and your moral philosophies. It is not a collection of treatises on prayer and providence, on free will and the Divine decrees, on forgiveness and immortality.

3. And yet again, unique and beautiful and sublime as the speech of the Lord was, you do not find in it the peculiar fruits of what the world calls genius,—the gems and flowers of the intellect and the imagination, the creations which charm us as we turn over the pages of famous orators, poets, historians, moralists. The Gospels are plainly different in kind from other literature, and do not attract a multitude of persons who are interested in other books. Men and women who will spend years in reading Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, will take up the Bible, certainly the New Testament, only in a forced and perfunctory way, and, if they find that it is the only book within their reach, will be idle and listless rather than recur to it; and this not because it is so familiar, for it is not half so familiar as their Horace or their Virgil, but because, if they must tell the truth, it is so very uninteresting,—because they are simply or chiefly men of letters, and the Life was not unfolded in that direction.

Note, for the facts have a practical value, that the throne of earthly power and glory, the academy of science, the schools of letters and eloquence, were passed by and treated as secondary and comparatively unimportant, when it pleased God to reveal in humanity the Highest and the Best. Men of the world, men of intellectual vigor and of large culture, continually forget this in their study of the life of Christ. They are disappointed, and turn away from the Master, because they do not find in him the strength, the wisdom, the beauty of this world; because he ministers no aid in their

statesmanship or their scientific investigations, because he does not satisfy their craving for intellectual stimulus or feed the imagination and the fancy, nay, because even the preaching is the foolishness of preaching, not the wisdom of the reasoner and the disputer. But would it not be wise for those who make so much account of thrones and dominions, of science and art, of letters and genius, to consider that, without these and against these, living a life purposely, as it would seem, divested of all these, Jesus of Nazareth has been seen to be the Son of God with power, has quietly taken his place at the head of the creation? Ought it not to be very suggestive of qualities and necessities in our nature, of divine gifts and human attainments, of results which do not depend upon position, or human knowledge, or what is called genius, and yet are manifestly more precious than all things else in the sight of God, and in the sight of man too? The limitations, the reserves, the silence of the Lord, his persistent purpose to be and do and say but one thing, his appearing from first to last in the form of a servant, his passing with the world for poor — poor in all that the world most prizes — when he was so rich, and might have surpassed all as monarch, as philosopher, as poet, — all these self-limitations and self-renunciations of the Son of God are profoundly significant; they teach us that what we call life, and wear our lives out in compassing, is not life, and has not even the promise for this world, not to speak of the world to come.

How was the Life manifested? What were the glory, the beauty, and the strength in which the Divine Word was clothed, and in which he has gone forth through these eighteen centuries, leading the world captive. Will the reader believe me, when I answer, — whether he believe or not, let him not say that I am speaking lightly of Him who is my heart's pride and joy, when I reply, — Simple goodness and simple truth! faith, hope, love, in their absolute completeness! — a life thoroughly, without the slightest exception, animated, moulded, colored by the Father, — the deeds the Father's

deeds, the words the Father's words, — the Sonship as absolute, as unqualified, as divinely beautiful, on earth and in time, under these human conditions, as in the heavens and through the eternal years. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. Everywhere else we find sin and selfishness, but not in the life of Jesus. A pattern of humility, he yet claims, in distinction from all that ever lived before or should ever live after, that no man can lay aught to his charge, that he had never done his own will, but only the will of God. Simply, quietly, he went about upon the Father's business, doing the nearest duty, declining no sacrifice, meeting evil only with good, obeying the Divine voice, taking from the Divine hand the cup of agony and shame and death, the One holy, the One righteous, the One altogether lovely. And as he was, and because he was, so he spake; his words were not the words of a reasoner, but of one who saw and knew grand and simple affirmations, everlasting years, great plain truths for all men everywhere, the simple as well as the wise, the child as well as the man, upon the highest and the deepest, and yet the most universal themes. With unveiled eyes he looked into God's face, and told us his vision. Radiant in celestial glory, he came out of God's heavens, and spake of the life everlasting. He was wholly submissive to God, open in every avenue and recess of his humanity to the Divine approaches; and so when he spake, God spake; when he forgave, God forgave; when he warned, God warned; when he blessed, God blessed; when he gave peace and rest, it was God's peace and God's rest, and they who received it knew that they were reconciled to God, and on their way to the blessed mansions. Jesus took it for granted that all true souls would welcome him and recognize his authority, and where he did not find such souls he was slow to work miracles, knowing that they would be rather occasions for cavil than persuasives to faith. The words of God, as he called his speech, relate to the desires and beliefs of the soul, to the treasures and needs of the heart and con-

science, not to those matters of science, art, and letters which belong to the understanding, and which, however important and satisfying they may be, are only accidents in comparison with our life for God and man, for goodness and heaven. The words of God do not need to be arranged in order, after the manner of the systematizing theologian ; they do their work wherever they are uttered, in a way which is their own. God in Christ, then, reconciles the world to himself by means of goodness and truth,—a goodness which was the life of God in man, a truth which was the word of God by the lips of man.

And time has proved that God's way was the true way. The humble Nazarene, the child of Mary, cradled in a manger, sustained through his ministry by the charity of friends, speaking no word which could interest the man of science or the man of letters, persecuted from village to village, and at last put to death between malefactors, his resurrection affirmed indeed by his disciples, but denied by the multitude,—even he, this servant of servants, is the acknowledged Head of the human race to-day, and has been that for centuries. His is the only face of God that we see ; his is the only voice of God that we hear ; his is the only hand of God that is laid upon us to guide and soothe. He declined the offered sceptre, and preached the Gospel to the poor peasants and fishermen, when he might have arrested the ear of the greatest and the wisest of earth. He relied upon the simplest acts of daily obedience, upon going about to do good in the humblest and most informal way, and chose only household and every-day words, the speech of the people, for his utterances ; and yet he has been indirectly the cause of the noblest civilization which our world has ever known, the inspiration of the manliest and wisest statesmanship, of the deepest science, of the highest poetry, and the divinest art. The statues of the gods, the masterpieces of heathen antiquity, are poor idols compared with the Christs and the Madonnas of Christian art ; for it is an everlasting truth, that if we will seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all

else that we need shall be added unto us; and that the soul creates and adorns the world, not the world the soul.

What do we find in the Man of Nazareth? What God would find in us, according to our human measures, ever enlarged and filled full by the spirit which is the Church's heritage. His word took form in just those gifts, graces, and attainments, — those qualities of being and of character which constitute our everlasting life, and change earth to heaven. It is of the first importance to know what we most need, and what He who bows his heavens and comes down will be sure to bring and to dispense. It is of the first importance to crave simple, hearty, every-day goodness, the abundance of self-sacrificing love and sweet patience, and forgiveness unto seventy times seven. It is of the first importance to crave a vital persuasion of doctrines rather practical than speculative, of the highest reason rather than of the finite understanding. If we wish to be men and brethren before the Heavenly Father, — to be right and to do right, — to be saints rather than sages, and only so far sages as we are saints, — then from our own convictions and affections we shall accept the tradition and approve the judgment of Christendom, and find in Jesus God's best gift to the world. The restoration and the enlargement of Christian faith and loyalty must proceed through the awakening of the spirit, the opening of the eyes and the ears of the soul; and though others may be borne along with the multitude, and shout hosannas with the rest, only they honor the Saviour who have been taught and drawn of God to crave the life which is truth, and the truth which is life. A world that deifies statesmanship, science, letters, art, will be indifferent to Christ. He hath no strength or wisdom or beauty that such a world should desire him. Therefore the Lord said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes"; and, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of God."

E.

## MARY'S DREAM.

"What shall I do to gain eternal life?  
 Discharge aright  
 The simple dues with which each day is rife, —  
 Yea, with thy might.  
 Ere perfect scheme of action thou devise  
 Will life be fled;  
 While he who ever acts as conscience cries  
 Shall live, though dead."

"THOSE sticks will never amount to anything, Mary," said Mrs. Smith to her daughter, who stood watering a few unattractive plants in the window. "The time is wasted which you spend over them; they never blossom. Success with plants is a gift, my dear child, which you evidently do not possess; don't try to contend against nature, but turn your attention to something which you were meant to do, and cannot help succeeding in. I hate to see such miserable, struggling sufferers as those seem to be."

Mary turned towards her mother the pale, thin face which was bending over plants apparently so full of sympathy for their mistress. "You would n't speak so of little deformed children," she said, "and these seem to claim just the same interest, only not so strongly. Lately I have had a sort of superstition connected with them, which made me afraid to neglect them. Don't laugh at me for letting a dream make an impression on me, and I will tell you what a strange one I had the other night.

"I saw these pots ranged like soldiers round my bed, and that tall camellia, whose buds fell off last week, waved those three leaves on the end of its branch with a great deal of rustling, which after a few seconds seemed to glide into words, and I found it was making me a little address in the name of all the plants. It thanked me for my care of them, and apologized for their not blossoming, by telling me that they were reserving their strength to reward me in the next world. If they blossomed here, they could not live hereafter; but which-

ever one had strength to resist the temptation of appearing to advantage now could reward me then with the results of just the virtues I had exercised upon it.

"After describing the great pleasures I was to enjoy from them, its concluding words were: 'Remember, then, beloved mistress, that as you sow you shall reap; that you shall in no wise lose your reward for any good you may show us, and though you may not be able to see the result now, do not think us ungrateful, and, above all things, do not be discouraged.'

"The dream was so real, that I went directly the next morning to see if the plants had been moved, and have felt ever since as if I could not give them too much care. Just think what a pleasant way of laying up treasure in heaven."

"Far too easy a way, Mary; if your dream meant anything, it was more than that, and I do not see why we may not believe that God speaks to us as he did to those we read of in the Bible, to whom he so often appeared in dreams. At any rate, it will do no harm to learn a higher lesson from this than the mere taking care of plants. There are far more precious trusts in the world, and you cannot but see that by faithfulness to those you will more surely lay up a treasure."

"You speak, mother, as if I neglected everything else for my plants; I'm sure I always mean to do all my duty faithfully."

"Yes; but are you always very much in earnest? Do you never neglect something of more importance when time slips away in what is to you such pleasant employment?"

Mary's eye fell on an unfinished soldier's shirt upon the table. She had planned to have it done at nine o'clock that morning; it was then half past ten, and it was not one stitch nearer its end, than when she left it the night before. The novelty had worn off; shirt-making was no longer pleasant work; she had made six, and almost unconsciously prided herself upon being more energetic than most of her friends. But now she saw that her motive had not been altogether a



pure one, and the feeling that she might be doing a really needed service made her sentiment about her flowers seem rather maudlin.

Her fault was a common one, even with the best-intentioned ; she mistook inclination for duty, and really believed that to be most right which was most agreeable.

When a child, she had often wondered to hear her mother declare that it was easy to do right, and the great difficulty in life was to decide what that right was. With her, it always lay on one side, wrong upon the other ; her difficulty was to determine to walk in the proper path, and her mother seemed in a strange state of blindness. Now, for the first time, she thought it possible to understand this blindness ; though she was far enough yet from realizing that, beside those prominent faults which are easily classed, there are for every one daily undefined duties, which must be looked for with an earnest purpose, or they flee away. She did not yet see that, if there is a momentary hesitation between two which seem to clash, inclination glides softly in, and whispers, "God is a God of love, delighting in the happiness of his children ; do what is pleasantest to you, and you please him."

What are really the difficulties in the way of duty, compared with this decision ? At the least hesitation the mind becomes bewildered between different opinions, swaying it, with an equally strong argument, from one side to the other, and it staggers along with a waste of strength which, if brought decidedly to bear upon any purpose, would make its mark. Truly the single eye fills the whole body with light, and even bigotry with decision seems more desirable than such unstable wanderings up and down the earth.

Mary's was a small difficulty, to be sure, but somewhat a case in point. Unsuccessful as she was with her plants, she took more pleasure and saw more beauty in them than many an owner of a beautiful conservatory in his treasures ; so, with the best intentions, she had reasoned that it was proper

to cultivate such a taste, and, while conscientiously believing that she was doing her duty, had been drawn on to spend too much time in what she enjoyed.

But, now that her eyes were opened, she felt impatient that so innocent an indulgence should be interfered with. "I have so few amusements," she said, "need that be taken from me? If you could see how other girls spend their time, you would be pleased that I should care for these things."

"I am pleased without seeing that, Mary; it is the most harmless of pleasures, but you will acknowledge, if you are really candid, that it is, after all, only a pleasure. Remember your father's favorite maxim, — Duty first, pleasure afterwards."

Still Mary's heart refused to give up her favorites; it was too petty a sacrifice. She could make great resolutions, be a heroine in thought and in deed too sometimes, as she had proved now and then on the rare occasions her life had afforded, but she could not realize that mountains are made of grains of sand. She was willing to bear great privations; but she had not learned to say to every little, teasing, pin-pricking trouble, This is as much from God's hand as the heaviest affliction, — is as deliberately intended for my discipline, accidental as it may appear.

Who can find inspiration to fill himself with noble resolves, and brace himself firmly against those little rough places in the road which really wear and tear the wheels the most? They come so unexpectedly, and yet so unceasingly, and are gone so soon, before we can prepare ourselves against them, that, even if we have preached an hour before that they are most to be guarded against, we trip over them and fall continually. The knight must destroy every little venomous snake he meets upon his road, or he will be hemmed in and destroyed by them before he meets face to face the serpent he has gone in search of.

The needle moved very slowly through the work, for Mary

was convinced against her will, and a dead leaf to be pulled, or a little earth to be loosened, called her attention almost irresistibly ; but she finished her task at last, and took one step towards learning the lesson which is always so slowly learned, — sometimes not in a whole lifetime, — that the only way to be sure of one's duty is to strive constantly to be perfectly true to one's self, or, still better, true to God, — to trust to his inspiration for guidance in everything, and, whatever one's convictions, not to love them too strongly, to part with them whenever others have stronger claims upon their places, no matter if pride and consistency suffer.

It may seem like straining at a gnat to make so much of so slight a question between duty and inclination ; but at times the merest trifle seems to pull the scales from our eyes, and we see through the smallest events of life the great meaning which lies behind, and the infinite importance of faithfulness in the least ; how the greatest and the least must seem all alike with God ; how all the great deeds of life, the accumulations of learning, accomplishments, money, everything we so often think invaluable and spend a lifetime to obtain, are swept away in a few years, and nothing is of any consequence but the "Fear God and keep his commandments," and for that nothing is small enough to be despised.

We all long to build for ourselves monuments stronger than brass, and we take as various means as there are different souls to accomplish the purpose ; but there is only one monument enduring enough to last, and that will be built for us by stronger hands than ours, even by God himself. All he asks of us is to collect our own material, from day to day, from moment to moment, as each wave of time throws it at our feet ; wasting no vain regret over the past ; taking no anxious thought for the morrow ; only trying faithfully to know and do the duty of to-day.

## RANDOM READINGS.

## PRAISING THE DEAD.

It is so rare to read an epitaph which is not either a violation of truth or of good taste and good sense, that one might well make provision in his will against this sort of inflection. You shall walk through Mount Auburn even, and see texts of Scripture misquoted and misapplied, and piles of eulogy laid on so thick and high as to excite the suspicion that they were meant to cover a multitude of sins. A Greek sophist proposed to deliver a eulogy on Hercules to the Spartans. "Who blames him?" said they, and went about their business. There is a delicate propriety in not praising too much either the living or the dead, unless their characters need clearing up.

Dr. Holmes, the old minister of Cambridge, it is said, in his prayers on funeral occasions, utterly disregarding the maxim, "Only speak good of the dead," always spoke the truth, and generally described the real character of the deceased. Sometimes, of course, this was not altogether pleasant or consoling; and once, a man having died who had some large blots upon his character, the friends, not caring to have them exhibited at the funeral, asked the Doctor to pass them over, — very properly, as we think. "He was a good father and a good neighbor, and further than that I would n't say anything about him." "Very well," said the Doctor. When he came to the prayer, he was as good as his word, — "We thank thee, Lord, that the deceased was a good father and a good neighbor, *and further than that we won't say anything about him.*"

We cannot perceive the necessity, as some ministers do, of fixing the future *status* of deceased persons, generally made according to profession or non-profession of religion, or certain pious phraseology used or not used at the last hour. In this way we have heard some of the most sanctimonious villains prayed into heaven, and men good at heart, with unsanctified exterior, dismissed to the shades. In all doubtful cases it seems much better not to attempt any information to the Divine Being on the state of the deceased.

In St. Michael's Church, London, is seen this epitaph : —

“ Here lieth wrapt in clay  
The body of William Wray.  
I have no more to say.”

We would much rather have William Wray's epitaph than one of those long ones whose clauses the reader is disposed to challenge at every step.

Epitaphs, however, on childhood and infancy, since these are God's handiwork freshly taken to himself, are less often violations of truth, though not of taste. Here is a very sweet one, from a country churchyard, over the grave of a little boy : —

“ He came the cup of life to sip, —  
Too bitter 't was to drain ;  
He put it gently from his lip,  
And went to sleep again.”

The only inscription that we remember ever being touched by over a strange grave, or which prompted the inquiry, “ Who lies here ? ” was the following from Wordsworth on a humble monument in Mount Auburn, but which long since, we believe, has given place to more costly and showy structures.

“ She lived unknown, — and few could know  
When Mary ceased to be ;  
But she is in her grave, — and O  
The difference to me ! ”

But after all, to a taste perfectly pure, and to affections in all their warmth and delicacy, is there not something very offensive in recording praise of any sort, or rhymes of any sort, upon the monuments of those we love ? Affection which is really true and tender shrinks from trying to put a friend's merits into an inscription, and any rhymes we can summon seem like profane jingle when we stand at the portals of immortality. A name dear and well beloved brings up all the past in clearest sunshine, and any phrases we can put under it seem worse than mockery, — as if any friend needed *them* as remembrancers of virtues which the heart embalms, and as if strangers would not pass them with careless eye. The language of the heart that deeply loves will ever be, “ The thoughts of thee too sacred are for daylight's common beam,” — too sacred to be paraded on tablets for everybody to look at. Only two things are

fit to be inscribed over the graves of those who are really sainted and beloved, — the simple name which alone unlocks all the places of memory, — and a few words of no human device, which can never grow stale with time, but in which all the soul's faith and hope are gathered up, — such as "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

S.

## LITTLE BY LITTLE.

"LITTLE by little," — ay, that's a fine thing !  
 For life's full of labor and time's on the wing.  
 Here a few stitches, there a few lines, —  
 Here a few words, worth bright gold from the mines.  
 I pray thee despise not the *little*, my friend ;  
 You know not what blessing you'll reap at the end.  
 Few things *we call great* will appear in our way,  
 And if we shall seek them, 'mid shadows we stray ;  
 But the sun loves to look on the small drop of dew,  
 And the rain bathes the flower, though hid from our view ;  
 And small is the seed that gives life to the tree  
 Now casting its shelter o'er you and o'er me.

Despise not the little, but treasure it well ;  
 For virtue and blessing it hath the true spell.  
 The little is yours now ; the great may not come  
 Till "your hand lose its cunning, your voice shall be dumb."

O, praise in your heart the Father all-wise,  
 Who blesseth the little in sweet charities ;  
 Who seeth the heart of the humble and weak,  
 By the small, loving deed who for usefulness seek.  
 For man is made better by one loving word  
 Which the innocent child in his bosom has stirred ;  
 One glance of the eye, one touch of the hand,  
 One tear-drop of sympathy, *vice* has unmanned.  
 O, cherish the small, flitting chances which Heaven,  
 Like ingots of gold, to your keeping has given :  
 Improve them and bless them, — here lieth the power  
 To perform noble action when cometh its hour.

And fear not, O pilgrim ! the hour is thine own :  
 No man ever lived who that hour hath not known,  
 When to stand for the right, or to live for the true,  
 The deep voice of God hath not called him to do.  
 But neglect not small duties, thou never canst be  
*Truly great, truly good, save through such ministry.*

\* \* \*

## THE CRISIS.

It seems to be in the order of Divine Providence that every people, like every individual, must pass through a day of judgment before attaining to a clear salvation and a clear and final elimination of the evil from the good. Those who think our great struggle has been brought on by some temporary political arrangement which might just as well have been avoided, are very shallow reasoners. It is one of the decisive conflicts of the new age which has been coming on for fifty years. And the hour is not "dark" except from the stand-point of Atheism. To those who will see the leadings of Providence and follow them, it is our day of redemption and glory, in which it is a privilege to live,—of transition from a lower to a higher plane of national existence, though doubtless with falling of the old heavens, and earthquakes in divers places. Mr. James, in his recent Oration, put this admirably, and in this wise:—

"This is the exact truth of the case. The political tumble-down we have met with is no accident, as unprincipled politicians would represent it. It is the fruit of an inevitable expansion of the human mind itself, of an advancing social consciousness in the race, an ever-widening sense of human unity, which will no longer be content with the old channels of thought, the old used-up clothes of the mind, but irresistibly demands larger fields of speculation, freer bonds of intercourse and fellowship. We have only frankly to acknowledge this great truth in order to find the perturbation and anxiety which now invade our unbelieving bosoms dispelled; in order to hear henceforth, in every tone of the swelling turbulence that fills our borders, no longer forebodings of disease, despair, and death, but prophecies of the highest health, of kindling hope, of exuberant righteousness, and endless felicity for every man of woman born. 'I was once,' says an old writer, 'I was once in a numerous crowd of spirits, in which everything appeared at sixes and sevens: they complained, saying that now a total destruction was at hand, for in that crowd nothing appeared in consociation, but everything loose and confused, and this made them fear destruction, which they supposed also would be total. But in the midst of their confusion and disquiet, I perceived a soft sound, angelically sweet, in which was nothing but what was orderly. The angelic choirs thus present were within or at the centre, and the crowd of persons to whom appertained what was disorderly were without or at the circumference. This flowing angelic melody continued a long time, and it was told me that hereby was signified how the Lord rules confused and disorderly things which are upon the surface, namely, *by virtue of a pacific principle in the depths or at the centre; whereby the disorderly things upon the surface are reduced to order, each being restored from the error of its nature.*'



The pacific and restorative principle which in the same way underlies all our political confusion and disorder, and which will irresistibly shape our national life to its own righteous and orderly issues, is the rising sentiment of human society or fellowship, the grand, invincible faith of man's essential unity and brotherhood. The social conscience, the conscience of what is due to every man as man, having the same divine origin and the same divine destiny with all other men, is becoming preternaturally quickened in our bosoms, and woe betide the church, woe betide the state, that ventures to say to that conscience, Thus far shalt thou go, and no further!"

---

### NOTICES OF BOOKS.

*The Doctrine of Atonement by the Son of God.* By HENRY SOLLY, Minister of the English Presbyterian Chapel, Lancaster, Author of "Gonzaga di Capponi," "The Development of Religious Life in the Modern Christian Church," "Walter Bernard," etc. London: E. T. Whitfield. — This is a fair octavo volume of 360 pages. We opened it rather languidly, expecting nothing from the theological mint from which it comes but some re-hash of the Antinomian doctrines of vicarious punishment. But we are very agreeably disappointed in finding a fresh utterance on an inexhaustible theme. Mr. Solly discards altogether the notion of substituted *punishment*, though contending for what will readily be granted, — substituted suffering. He is in sympathy with Maurice and other writers of the English Broad Church. His chapter on the Trinity departs widely from the current orthodoxy, and makes a much nearer approximation to the ante-Nicene theology. He denies with emphasis the personality of the Holy Spirit. It is personified, he says, just as wisdom and charity are personified. On the other hand, it is spoken of as a thing, and put in the neuter gender. When was this ever done of a person? A thing may be personified and put in the masculine gender; but what writer would degrade a person to the neuter gender, or speak of Christ or God as *it*? He argues strenuously for the essential divinity of Christ, as a being eternally begotten of the Father, as the early Church fathers believed, — not *created*, as Arius believed. But, though consubstantial with the Father, Christ was subordinate to him, for there

cannot be two infinite beings. He does not seem to see the self-contradiction involved in the proposition that a being finite and limited can be *in essence* Divine, and he assumes too readily that the ante-Nicene fathers meant by two *hypostases* two beings or persons in the modern sense. The book is written in an excellent spirit, is modest yet positive in its statements, and breathes a spirit of genuine piety.

S.

*Hymns of Spiritual Devotion for the New Christian Age.* By THOMAS L. HARRIS. Fifth Edition. New York: New Church Publishing Association.—Here are 570 Hymns, all of them, with the exception of here and there a line, original, most of them produced by Mr. Harris, or rather, as he believes, by supernal intelligences uttering themselves through him. Though unequal in merit, they are uniform in spirit and style, and bear the stamp of the same genius. Almost every one is redolent of the New Church theology, of which Mr. Harris is an ardent believer, and of the Christian spiritualism of which he is an organ. They are too florid for our taste, and run into too much sameness of imagery and expression, especially in the line of stars and roses, and while they regale the ear and the fancy perhaps with too much sweetness, do not supply enough of strong stimulus and bracing air. But we will be grateful for the many excellences, without demanding everything. Mr. Harris, with all his redundancies, is a genuine poet. He only claims these hymns as the first effusions of a more spiritual era of worship, "lyrical utterances among the earlier Voices of the Spirit in the morning of the new Christian year." We make a single selection.

"MARY MAGDALENE.

"When weeping Mary bathed the feet  
Of her incarnate Lord,  
And mingled blessings with the sweet  
And costly gift she poured,

"He owned her there, though once forlorn,  
With heart the spoiler's prey:—  
She lived in meekness to adorn  
The martyr's glorious way.

"She scorned the tempter's cruel thrall,  
And in her sainted grace  
Arose all pure and virginal  
To heaven's thrice holy place.

" Oft in our silent streets by night,  
 Clad in celestial flame,  
 She moves to call from sin and blight  
 The fallen child of shame.

" Her heart, the alabaster vase,  
 With odors rich and rare,  
 Flows down to bathe the feet that trace  
 The pathway of despair.

" Jesus, 't is thus that hearts restored  
 Their tribute bring to thee;  
 Led by the Spirit and the Word,  
 They cross the martyr sea.

" In secret beauty, calm and still,  
 While years and ages roll,  
 They seek to save from hate and ill  
 The wandering human soul."

*Tales of the Day, Original and Selected.* Boston: William Carter and Brother. — We have received the first three numbers of this very attractive serial. It is issued monthly, in octavo form, each number containing about 100 pages. The publishers promise to collect the very best of the tales of the day which appear, "admitting none that are not good in moral tone and superior in literary execution." They are redeeming their promise. The series is beautifully printed, and the matter is of rare popular interest. It is afforded at the moderate price of twenty-five cents a number. It is adapted alike for home reading or for filling up some of the long hours of camp life when the mind of the soldier is craving for healthful food and exercise. We notice in the May and June numbers two poetic effusions of rare merit, — "Waiting," and "O, it's hard to die from home." The latter, by Norman McLeod, we have marked for insertion in our own pages. We wish the publishers abundant success in their enterprise. s.

*The Social Significance of our Institutions: an Oration delivered by Request of the Citizens at Newport, R. I., July 4th, 1861.* By HENRY JAMES. Boston: Ticknor and Fields. — These forty pages are a rare treat, whether for the keen philosophic insight into the nature of American institutions, or as specimens of vigorous English by a writer who commands the resources of the language with wondrous dexter-

ity. The last nine pages, which touch on our national crisis, have a fearful intensity, every sentence seeming like a shot from an Enfield rifle. We extract the closing paragraph.

"For my part, if I thought that our rulers were going to betray in this agonizing hour the deathless interest confided to them, — if I thought that Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward were going at last to palter with the sublime instincts of peace and righteousness that elevated them to power and give them all their personal prestige, by making the least conceivable further concession to the obscene demon of Slavery, — then I could joyfully see Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Seward scourged from the sacred eminence they defile, yea more, could joyfully see our boasted political house itself laid low in the dust forever, because in that case its stainless stars and stripes would have sunk from a banner of freemen into a dishonored badge of the most contemptible people on earth; a people that bartered away the fairest spiritual birthright any people ever yet were born to, for the foulest mess of material pottage ever concocted of shameless lust and triumphant fraud."

*Our Duty under Reverse. A Sermon preached in the Church of the "Cambridgeport Parish," Sunday, 28 July, 1861.* By JOHN F. W. WARE. Boston: John Wilson and Son. — Mr. Ware sees nothing in the defeat of the national army which will not work just the good we needed, and help our deliverance from present evil. "Not even will I own that the hands have been put back upon the dial, because the campaign is checked and must be begun anew. To the nation, for the cause, the reverse is healthy. It will bring us to think; it will show the work that is before us in its terrible magnitude; it will hush the bravado spirit so wide-spread and so offensive; it will show the demand for all our resource, all our wisdom, all our faith; it will make us realize what we have only said, that this is *our* trial day." "There is no room in the present for doubt and fear. Everything encourages." Timely words! expressing, we believe, the heart and resolve of all true and loyal men after the first terrible shock was over. But how many millions of eyes were sleepless through the awful night of Monday, July 22, after the first tidings came over the wires!